Four Essays on Organizational Governance

Leonard Bacon

with an introduction by Peter Dobkin Hall



The Christian Doctrine of Stewardship in Respect to Property. A Sermon Preached at the Request of the Young Men's Benevolent Society of New Haven, Connecticut. New Haven, CT: Printed by Nathan Whiting, 1832.

"Responsibility in the Management of Societies." *The New Englander* V. New Haven, CT: A.H. Maltby, 1847.

Sketch of the Life and Public Services of Hon. James Hillhouse of New Haven. New Haven, CT: n.p., 1860.

"A Voice from Squashville." *The New Englander and Yale Review* 29: 113 (October 1870).

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Peter Dobkin Hall

Richard Magat

LEONARD BACON, ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE, AND THE LEGITIMATION OF VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Democratic government, as it was understood at the end of the eighteenth century, had no place for voluntary associations. The will of the citizenry was expressed through government; associations organized by special interests could only serve to weaken and undermine representative institutions.

Associations are nowhere mentioned in the founding documents of the nation or the states and, through the 1780s and 1790s, they provoked alarm from critics of every political persuasion. In 1783, when veteran officers of the Continental Army organized the Society of the Cincinnati, opponents denounced the hazards that such "self-created" associations posed to republican government (Burke 1783). The *Federalist Papers*, the influential series of articles written by Alexander Hamilton, James, Madison, and John Jay to promote ratification of the federal constitution, attacked associations as engines of faction. Washington himself in his Farewell Address warned citizens of associations which "serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force," enabling "small but artful and enterprising" minorities to put their will "in the place of the delegated will of the nation" (Washington 1796). Even leaders not overtly hostile to associations fretted that

> the creation of a great variety of corporate interests, in themselves powerful and important, must have a direct tendency to weaken the powers of government. When those are multiplied, and all the ability of the state is engaged in one or the other; and when the interests may militate with each other essentially, it is in vain to reason upon naked principles unfortified by established rules. No one can foresee what the event will be, no body can predict the consequences, while every one will lament the calamity (James Sullivan quoted in Handlin & Handlin, 1969, 261).

As late as the 1830s, prominent public intellectuals like Unitarian "pope" William Ellery Channing and Baptist leader Francis Wayland (who was also president of Brown University) denounced the spiritual hazard posed by the idea that Christians could delegate their personal moral responsibilities to organizations and worried about the threat that associations representing special interests posed to the Republic (Channing 1829; Wayland 1838). Associations "accumulate power in a few hands," Channing wrote in 1829

> and this take places just in proportion to the surface over which they spread. In a large institution, a few men rule, a few do everything; and if the institution happens to be directed to objects about which conflict and controversy exist, a few are able to excite in the mass strong and bitter passions, and by these to obtain an immense ascendancy. Through such an Association, widely spread, yet closely connected by party feeling, a few leaders can send their voices and spirit far and wide, and, where great funds are accumulated, can league a host of instruments, and by menace and appeals to interest, can silence opposition. Accordingly, we fear that in this country, an influence is growing up through widely spread Societies, altogether at war with the spirit of our institutions, and which, unless jealously watched, will, will gradually but surely encroach on freedom of thought, of speech, and of the press.

"Of consequence," he concluded

> They are perilous instruments. They ought to be suspected. They are a kind of irregular government created within our Constitutional government. Let them be watched closely. As soon as we find them resolved or even disposed to bear down on a respectable man or set of men, or to force on the community measures about which wise and good men differ, let us feel that a dangerous engine is at work among us, and oppose to it our steady and stern disapprobation (Channing 1829).

Connecticut clergyman and social activist Leonard Bacon (1802-1881) made major contributions to the effort to articulate the relationship of voluntary associations to representative government. Early in his career, he played a key role in redefining the role of religion in public life at a time when churches were losing their legal standing as tax-supported public institutions and having to embrace new and unfamiliar status as voluntary associations competing in a religious marketplace. Later, as associations became major actors in the political debate over slavery, he helped to pose fundamental questions about organizational governance and accountability as they related to the role of voluntary associations in democratic life.

The son of frontier missionary, Leonard Bacon was born in a log cabin in the Michigan wilderness (Bacon, 1876; Kingsley, *et al.*, 1882; Walker, 1901, 409-455; Bacon, 1931; Maurer, 1938, 100-148).. Despite his family's poverty, he graduated from Yale College in 1820, studied theology at the Andover Theological Seminary, and was called to the pulpit of New Haven's First Church in 1825 -- a prestigious appointment that could have only been possible through the intervention of his powerful mentors, evangelist Lyman Beecher and Yale theologian Nathaniel W. Taylor (Hopkins, 1959).

Bacon began his career at a time when the Congregational Church, long "established" in the New England states, was having to adjust to the realities of "disestablishment." No longer privileged or tax-supported, it had to compete in a religious marketplace for members and influence. This was no easy task at a time when fewer than one in ten Americans claimed membership in any religious congregation (Finke & Starke, 1992).

Bacon's mentors, evangelist Lyman Beecher and Yale theologian Nathanial W. Taylor, anticipating the likelihood of disestablishment, had begun preparing for it by experimenting with what Beecher called "the voluntary system." Offended by alcoholic overindulgence of his fellow clergymen, Beecher mustered forces within the church to promote temperance. The success of this effort led him to a bolder effort to reform public morals using voluntary associations that enlisted broader citizen commitment (Beecher 1961, I: 177-184). When he moved to Boston in 1826, he began organizing associations of young men in his church to actively involve themselves in politics and in crusades against gambling and drunkenness (Beecher 1961, I: 107-111). By the 1830s, voluntary initiatives spearheaded by Beecher and his allies had become an "evangelical united front" of social reform that embraced a wide variety of causes, from the promotion of education and sabbath observance to crusades against a variety of social evils (including slavery).

In his preaching and his organizing activities, Beecher redefined the relation of the church to the individual, to society, and the polity. As disestablishment deprived churches of official status as moral arbiters, Beecher worked to empower

believers to act as moral agents in their communities as individuals and as members of voluntary associations. Beecher's efforts fueled the development of a densely interwoven network of secular organizations operated by people whose motives were fundamentally religious (though the purposes of the organizations themselves were not). In promoting goals like temperance and morality that were indisputably in the public interest, Beecher helped to shift perception of voluntary associations from selfish promoters of special interests to advocates of public welfare.

While Beecher's "experimental" efforts addressed the pragmatic dimensions of the "voluntary system," the task of working out its theological and organizational implications was left to others. On the theological side, Nathaniel W. Taylor, took the lead, arguing that individuals become depraved by their own actions and that they retained the power to act freely, rationally, and morally. The role of the church and the minister was to confront sinners with their capacity for choice and to enlarge their ability to exercise it (Maurer, 1938, 108-9; Ahlstrom, 1972, 403-28). Many critics of "Taylorism" or the "New Haven Theology," as it came to be known, accused it of skirting Arminianism. But Taylor's own writings, like those of his friend Beecher, at no point adopted the Arminian view that salvation could be attained through good works: the key issue for them, as for their intellectual forebear Jonathan Edwards, was the spiritual condition of the individual actor. That condition was the prerequisite to individual moral agency -- and affecting that condition was the task of the church.

Bacon on Stewardship

As Taylor's student and successor in the pulpit of New Haven's First Society, Bacon was inevitably drawn into discussion of the possibilities of the "voluntary system." In 1832, he delivered a sermon to the Young Men's Benevolent Society of New Haven entitled *The Christian Doctrine of Stewardship in Respect to Property* in which he began to articulate his own ideas on the subject.

This sermon to the rising young merchants and lawyers of New Haven began with a question from Scripture (Acts IX: 6) which starkly posed the issue of moral agency: "Lord, what wilt thou have me do?" The question was asked by Saul (better known at the Apostle Paul), a man not unlike the members of Bacon's audience, a man who "had enjoyed the best opportunities, in respect to education," a man of talent, energy, learning, and eloquence, and who "bid fair to win the palm from every competitor, and to attain the highest distinctions among his countrymen." Struck down on the road to Damascus with a vision of Jesus -- whom he had up to then violently opposed -- Saul/Paul abandoned "all his aspiring purposes, "all his strong hopes of distinction among his countrymen" and devoted "all his talents, his eloquence, his learning, his power and skill to move the minds of men . . . to the work of his Savior and Lord."

As a good Calvinist, Bacon was careful to suggest that Paul "did not more than his duty" in surrendering himself to God's will. It was God who had made the choice of Paul, not Paul who chose God. But this fact did not diminish the importance of choice, for it was Paul who chose to give himself, "with all his talents and faculties, to the business of advancing the glory of God and the happiness of man." Paul's use of his talents -- his eloquence and education -- were analogous, Bacon argued, to the broader question which the Young Benevolent Society had asked him to address: "What is the right use of property on Christian Principles?" Suppose, Bacon asked, that "instead of being a man of learning and eloquence and intellectual power, [Paul] had been a man of wealth, traveling for pleasure, or a man of business, traveling

in pursuit of gain. . . ." Would "the first emotion of the soul submitting to the Savior have been" other than "Lord what wilt thou have me do?" "Had his possessions and his faculties been of another sort," Bacon argued, "the same spirit [would] have led him to consecrate this wealth and this skill, with the same earnest self-denying devotion, to the same great cause" because a man is no more accountable to God for the use of one talent than for the use of another. "Christian principle," Bacon declared, "is not one thing in a man education and intellectual power" and "altogether another thing in the man of property." More to the point, Bacon suggested, there was no real difference between the situation of an intellectual like Paul, who was "called to preach the gospel," and "the Christian whose station in the house of God is private," for both were bound to regard themselves and all that they owned "as belonging to the Lord" and each was "bound always to ask in regard to every one of his possessions and faculties, whatever they may be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" "The doctrine which I regard the scriptures as teaching on this subject may be thus stated," Bacon asserted,

> *Every man is bound to regard all his property, and all the avails of his industry and enterprise, as belonging to God; he is to hold it all, and manage it, as a sacred trust for which he must give account to the supreme proprietor; he is to apply it and dispose of it exclusively as the Lord's servant, and in the work of the Lord.*

Naturally, Bacon turned to scripture to support his position, settling on the parable of the talents as the paradigm of stewardship. Once again, it echoed the Beecher/Taylor line on moral agency, with God showing the way and the individual choosing to take up the task. Bacon argued that the parable illustrated the indebtedness of those endowed with talents and abilities to God from whom those talents came. But it was not enough merely to acknowledge one's debt to God: rather, every talent, every possession, every act and gesture had to become "means by which they can influence each other. . . [and] in the use of which they can praise him and advance his cause and kingdom." In Weberian terms, Bacon was urging his listeners towards "a thoroughgoing Christianization of the whole life," to adopt a "methodically rationalized system of ethical conduct" which would govern every aspect of their lives.

In urging New Haven's rising young business and professional leaders to infuse their public and private lives with their religious beliefs, Bacon was not emphatically not suggesting that they abandon their callings or forsake their possessions and ambitions. Quite the contrary: their work in the world was the means of serving God: rather every man had to come to regard his wealth and abilities as "a trust to be employed in the service of him who went about doing good." For this reason, men should strive for achievement -- should actively seek material gain --because judicious use of wealth and talent was a measure of one's worthiness to be the steward of greater and more enduring forms of spiritual wealth. Property, Bacon argued, was a means to an end -- a symbol of spiritual riches that underlay its pursuit. In a curious echo of the Prudent Man Rule that had been set forth by the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court only a few years before:

> Do what you will, the capital is at hazard. . . . All that can be required of a trustee to invest, is, that he shall conduct himself faithfully and exercise a sound discretion. He is to observe how men of prudence, discretion and intelligence manage their own affairs, not in regard to speculation, but in regard to the permanent disposition of their funds, considering the probable income, as well as the probable safety of the

capital to be invested (Harvard College and Massachusetts General Hospital v. Amory 1830).

Bacon proceeded to underscore that he did not mean that his auditors should put their "property at the disposal of the church, or to give it over into the hands of ministers." Not only was the church "not formed to manage the property of its members, or to command their charitable efforts," but, because believers were directly accountable to God, their stewardship of their wealth and talents -- their use of these things for good purposes -- had to be personal acts, personal commitments which could not be delegated to others. The moral agent, in other words was not -- and could not be -- the church, but the individual -- for God held individuals, not institutions, to account. At the same time, Bacon stressed, property need not be devoted to religious purposes to fulfill the trust that God placed in individuals: "it is your duty to manage your property and to dispose of it, according to your best judgment, so as to accomplish the greatest possible amount of good," underlining once again the centrality of individual choice and individual responsibility.

Of course, none of this precluded forming associations to pursue the common good or committing funds to the management of others who might use it more productively. But this in no way diminished one's ultimate personal responsibility: moral agency could not, in his view, be delegated. Bacon proceeded to clarify this point in a footnote, in which he compared the responsibilities of individuals entrusting funds for charitable purposes to associations to business investments.

Bacon concluded his sermon by considering more particularly the nature and possibilities of voluntary associations. Having made clear that, properly used, they were merely extensions of individual moral purpose and not substitutes for it, he pointed to the extraordinary way in which they expanded the opportunities of individuals to engage in "THE BUSINESS OF DOING GOOD." They permitted a vast expansion in the scope of benevolent action --the dimensions of which he proceeded to outline, concluding with a description of his time as "the age which other generations will mark as the era of combined and associated efforts for the salvation of the world." Associations not only permitted individuals to extend their moral reach globally, more significantly it vast expanded the scale and power of individual action, giving "the humblest individual the power of doing good to all men, in a sense in which it was once the prerogative of princes."

For all of his enthusiasm for associations, Bacon's last sentence returned to the doctrinal core of his conception of moral agency: his sermon, he reminded his listeners, was not a pitch for institutional support and participation, but an appeal "to every man's conscience in the sight of God." How they choose to act, what they choose to do with their property, would have to come from "every man's own judgment and conscience," through faith in "Him who giveth the increase," and made "effectual by his Spirit."

Bacon on Governance and Accountability

When young Leonard Bacon enthused about the possibilities of voluntary associations to his young friends and colleagues in New Haven in 1832, the "voluntary system" was still a novelty whose possibilities, for good or for ill, were largely unknown. Preventing them from fulfilling the warnings of the Boston doubter seemed merely a matter of having the right attitude -- possessing a conviction of the superiority of the individual to the organization. Organizations considered in the

abstract seem infinitely malleable; as real entities, however, which aggregate property and interests, they take on, as Bacon discovered, an intractable personhood (what sociologists call the "Iron Law of Oligarchy"). More than this, because the largest of the associations were centrally headquartered in places remote both from those who contributed their funds and from those who received them, it became difficult to monitor whether funds being collected were being devoted to the purposes intended by the donors (a classic example of what today's economists call contract failure).

By the 1840s, the fragile associational efforts of evangelicals had taken on a life of their own. The largest of their organizations took in hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in contributions and had built up large staffs to coordinate the activities of hundreds of missionaries and to print and distribute tens of thousands of publications around the world (Griffin 1960, 79-80). The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which had began in 1811 with three clergymen who volunteered as secretaries, by 1846 had a full-time salaried staff which supervised the activities of more than 300 missionaries and assistants in 93 missions. It boasted annual revenues of more than a quarter of a million dollars -- making it by far the wealthiest eleemosynary corporation in the United States (by comparison, Harvard's endowment at this point was less than half a million dollars and its annual revenues less than $50,000). The American Tract Society -- which boasted annual revenues in nearly $154,000 in 1846 -- had a salaried staff of 12 corresponding secretaries and clerks who supervised the activities of 175 field agents who sold its publications throughout the United States.

Governance structures had also become more elaborate and their control of the organizations accordingly altered. Because they were national organizations and their trustees, who necessarily represented various geographical constituencies, could not oversee day-to-day operations, delegated authority for making many decisions to "prudential committees" (what we would call executive committees). Additional committees were spawned, as the need arose, to take on other special responsibilities. As the organizations grew -- and their financial needs along with them --, they sought to broaden their constituencies by enlarging their boards, by creating dual boards, or by seeking direct affiliation with the governing bodies of particular denominations. While in theory these increased numbers should have made organizations more accountable to relevant stakeholders, since larger boards represented more of the public and included a greater range of stakeholders, they actually had the opposite effect. Greater numbers intensified the informational asymmetries between boards, committees, and salaried staff -- much to the advantage of staffs and to board cliques and factions.

Needless to say, such circumstances fundamentally undermined Bacon's early exhortations about associations as arenas for individual moral agency -- a fact by which he was profoundly troubled. His knowledge of these issues was far from casual: Bacon was one of the most active and committed trustees in New England, serving at one time or another on the boards of the Domestic Missionary Society of Connecticut, the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions; the Congregational Home Missionary Society, the Society for Promoting Collegiate and Theological Education at the West, and the American College and Education Society -- as well as on numerous denominational boards and commissions and as a director of local charitable and educational enterprises.

In 1847, he elaborated his concerns about the governance of eleemosynary organizations in an article published in *The New Englander*, entitled "Responsibility in the Management of Societies." It was a remarkable piece, not only because of the detailed description and analysis Bacon provided of two of the largest societies, but also because, rather than using his essay an opportunity to denounce specific abuses, he took it as an occasion to reflect in very concrete and organizational terms on the problems of governance, the mechanics of associational accountability, and the broader issues of moral agency. Bacon's concerns were not entirely disinterested: his increasing commitment to abolitionism and his frustration in his efforts to persuade the national organizations with which he was involved to take principled stands on the issue of slavery had kindled his awareness that the chief obstacle to his efforts was the tendency of the management of great charitable enterprises to "slide into the hands of the executive" -- with an "almost irresistable" impulse to sacrifice commitment to fundamental principles to administrative convenience and efficiency (Bacon 1847, 62).

Bacon began his essay by describing a praising the "new order of things" in which "associated enterprises for the propagation of Christianity, at home and abroad, have become almost the greatest of the material and visible interests of the Christian commonwealth," which had come to "act irresistibly on all the relations of churches to each other, on the development and culture of piety, on the administration of the gospel in the pulpit, and even on theological dogmas" (Bacon 1847, 28). While taking pains to emphasize that he in no way sighed "to breathe for the good old days. . . when the spirit of aggression against the empire of darkness, slumbered in the church," he made clear his concern that "in an age of activity and of religious enterprises," there was danger "that important truths may be forgotten or undervalued in the zeal and hurry of the movement." He pointed in particular to the impact of their enormous growth both on their understanding of their own purposes and, more importantly, on their relation to the churches, the clergy, and the public. He expressed particular "uneasiness" that the power "accumulating in the hands of the secretaries and executive committees" had made these societies dangerously self-serving.

Bacon proceeded to examine the role of management and the peculiar trust placed in it. Though noting that in most cases, "the executive department of a great benevolent society" was "chiefly in the hands of ministers of the gospel," this fact did not render them immune from corruption. After pointing out the enormous importance of these executive positions, which, because of their power to influence public opinion and the actions of believers, had become, in a very real sense, offices of "the highest moment in the religious world," he went on to point out that what made them true to their trust and effective as managers was not their clerical status, but their personal qualities. This, Bacon argued, was an insufficient safeguard and, in consequence, raised fundamental questions about associations, their managers, and the nature of the trust imposed on them: "Ought the executive department of a great voluntary society, for missions or for any similar enterprise, to be really and formally responsible to anybody? --if so, to whom, and how?" Bacon asked. "Who are the society? --where is the control? Shall the officers in the executive department govern the whole movement, responsible only to God? Or shall they be under the government of some constituency? (Bacon 1847, 29-30)

After proceeding through a detailed description and analysis of the scope and scale of the operations of the American Board of Foreign Missions and the American Tract Society, Bacon posed his fundamental concerns more

concretely. First, he argued, "a true responsibility of the executive to some superior or constituent power, is a security against mismanagement and the gradual perversion of the trust," not because of "fraudulent mismanagement," but "in consequence of devoting their minds too engrossingly to the one particular interest which they have in hand. "Great perversions of trusts," Bacon noted, tended to occur inadvertently, as a by-product of routine, taking place "for the most part unconsciously, gradually, and with the best intentions" (Bacon 1847, 32-33). Bacon did not think that the solution to this problem was to eliminate managers and board committees, but to require them to report fully and regularly on their activities.

A second reason for "making the executive administration of these societies, truly and formally responsible to some definite constituency" was the tendency of power to accumulate dangerously in the hands of a few. "Power, and especially executive power, if placed in irresponsible hands, grows and accumulates till nothing but the violence of revolution can resist it. For the same reason the power which is necessarily involved in the administration of these great societies, and of others like them, and which must necessarily be entrusted to a few hands, should be carefully guarded and bounded by corresponding responsibility. . . ."

Bacon's third argument in favor of increasing the accountability of executives was that failure to do so might invite political agitation against the societies -- as had happened against the Masons. "An irresponsible executive at the head of one of these great movements," Bacon warned, "is constantly liable to suspicion and assault. . . . There are men, and in this country of ours they are not insignificant in numbers or in the faculty of making themselves felt, whose instinctive jealousies are kindled at the sight of power, and who can not rest till they have ascertained that there is some adequate security against the possible abuse of it." More dangerous still, Bacon argued, was the tendency of such organizations to insulate themselves from legitimate criticism and, in so doing, act to destroy "the influence and reputation, of the refractory individuals who . . . have dared to embarrass the great and blessed cause." (Bacon 1847, 34)

Bacon's argument, as it emerged, was suggesting a notion of public accountability that was neither political accountability in the commonly understood sense of the term or market accountability. Of course, he conceded, great associations were necessarily dependent on the public of donors to commend its object and its methods to the largest possible number of individuals, in order to enlist the largest possible number of supporters and friends." But this did not engage the fundamental questions of accountability since, as presently constituted, donors had no means of influencing -- or even monitoring -- the ways in which their funds were used. Accountability to the general public -- political accountability -- not only meant that organizations would have to submit to the judgment of people who were hostile or indifferent to its work, but also gave entrenched managers an undue advantage because of the enormous power of the societies to influence public opinion.

Having dismissed accountability to the public in a direct political or market sense as unworkable, Bacon considered the alternative of accountability to churches and denominations. This he found equally unsatisfactory, because effectively merging the activities of the churches with the operations of the missionary and tract societies merely shifted the problem of unaccountable bureaucracy into the churches themselves.

Finally, Bacon considered the alternative of having administrators and executive committees report annually to general assemblies of members and the interested public. The problem here, in Bacon's view, was that such gatherings tended to be forms of public entertainment, not forums for the conduct of the serious business of "free inquiry and debate."

The one form of accountability that in Bacon's view ensured the accountability of administrators was a true working board of trustees, in which each member retained a sense of individual responsibility for the activities of the organization. Bacon's conception of what made a good board was amazingly prescient, showing an remarkable sensitivity both to group dynamics and to issues of organizational boundaries -- the mechanisms for defining the borders between organizations and society at- large. More significantly, however, it proposes a way of preserving the efficacy of individual moral agency in large complex organizations by properly structuring and functionally differentiating the various components of governance and operations. Even more, importantly, it comes to terms with issues of organizational legitimacy and authority in a democracy by suggesting that these, rather than proceeding from electoral or political accountability, proceeded from the fiduciary responsibilities imposed on trustees as managers of the property of others. These involved both religious elements of stewardship and formal legal elements which proceeded from the equitable relationship of trustees to donors and beneficiaries, living and the dead.

The notion that there could be forms of authority that could both exist legitimately within a democracy founded in the popular will, much less the idea that they might be crucial to sustaining dmeocracy, it was an astonishing assertion with important implications for perfecting the then still fragile rationale for the existence of voluntary organizations. When the article was written, the Jeffersonian and Jacksonian animus against voluntary organizations was still very much alive. Most states outside of New England either forbade or strictly limited the activities of private commercial and eleemosynary corporations -- a situation that would persist until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when an aggressive effort to spread the doctrines and technologies of civil privatism would transform the institutional cultures of New York, Pennsylvania, and the midwestern states.

Although Bacon modestly concluded that he had "proposed no revolutionary changes, no new constitutions, no rash experiments," and assured his readers that his proposed remedy involved "nothing violent, nothing revolutionary," just "very simple changes . . . great establishments," it was clear that he realized that he had achieved an important conceptual breakthrough. "We will not pursue the subject any farther at present," he mildly asserted, "for the discussion which we have opened is one which is likely to be taken up in other quarters, and which we may therefore have occasion to resume, hereafter."

It is no exaggeration to call Bacon's essay the first serious study of nonprofit management. His analysis of the dimensions and dilemmas of governance is remarkably penetrating. And even though he does not use terms like "contract failure," "bureaucratization," or "the iron law of oligarchy," he describes them with such astonishing clarity that the essay is as relevant to the problems of organizational accountability and, more specifically, of board-staff conflict, as they existed in the 1840s as they do to those problems as we perceive them today.

As his career developed, Leonard Bacon did more than write about trusteeship. In all of the many organizations he

served as trustee, he was an active -- if sometimes troublesome -- force. He took seriously the idea that trustees had to act on the dictates of the conscientious intellect to use their judgement, to apply their critical powers, and to act disinterestedly to maintain the public trust. This was, in a significant sense, an application of the notion, first articulated in his 1832 sermon on the stewardship of property, that believers had to infuse every aspect of their lives with their beliefs. This radical notion was which in a very real sense was closer to the ideas of writers like Thoreau than to the comfortable clerical rationalizers of the rising industrial order.

Such convictions eventually led him -- and many others -- to question not only the management practices of organizations like the American Tract Society but also their willing accomodation to slavery (American Tract Society 1857, 3-9, 225-44; 1858, 3-10, 200-216, 180-199; American Tract Society, 1857). At a tumultuous meeting of the Society in May of 1858, Bacon took the floor as the spokesman for the abolitionists in the organization. Although outnumbered by 5 to 1 (management had packed the meeting with its friends) and interrupted by hisses, hoots, and catcalls, Bacon

> denounced the officers as hypocrites. The executive committee, he said, claimed to sanction only material designed to receive the approval of all evangelical Christians. Yet, though it issued tracts condemning tobacco, some of the officers chewed and smoked the weed. Although tracts condemned wine drinking, some officers quaffed large amounts. Although tracts forbade dancing, some leaders held balls in their homes. What was to prevent the society from publishing material against the moral evils and vices of slavery? "Is it not time to have done with such tomfoolery?" Bacon cried. "Is it not time to address ourselves to the weightier matters of the [moral] law as righteousness, mercy, and truth?" (Griffin 1960, 196).

Bacon and his allies were outvoted by the hand-picked assembly --and the abolitionists walked out and formed their own organization.

Bacon on the Christian as Citizen

Throughout his career Bacon had tried to accommodate his belief in democracy with his religious convictions. The central theme of his work was the premise that the church could empower individual believers to change society, first by changing their lives and then by joining together in voluntary associations that, by engaging "THE BUSINESS OF DOING GOOD," could outweigh the amoral self-seeking of mere market relationships.

But as the crisis of the Union intensified in the 1850s, Bacon's faith in democracy -- and in associations -- was shaken. The slave power dominated democratic institutions, public and private. Organizations which had been established to do God's work had become corrupted by the same forces of self-interest and hypocrisy that they had been established to counteract. And, even as men and women of good will were forced to turn to direct political action, the battle seemed ever more dubious. National political leaders lacked all conviction. Leaders of the evangelical associations were more interested in sales, markets, and consolidating their own power, than in making the Word flesh.

Rather than despairing, Bacon returned to an examination of first principles. Much as Lincoln focused his speeches on the fundamental truths of the Declaration of Independence (Wills, 1992), Bacon, with his keen sense of how

ideals were embedded in organizations, turned to the history of his own community and its organizations to explore the possibility of "the public spirited citizen in a republic" -- a man who could stand above the rage and tumult of the crowd and by the example of his faith and the strength of his character, bring order to it. Up to this point, Bacon had focused his thinking on organizational leadership -- now he began to consider the connection between it and the broader issues of community leadership.

The product of this meditation was a pamphlet length biography, *Sketch of the Life and Public Services of Hon. James Hillhouse of New Haven* (1860), which originally appeared in Henry Barnard's *American Journal of Education*. Although ostensibly a simple biographical sketch, the essay was actually a carefully crafted piece of mythmaking -- built around Bacon's ideas about the dimensions of moral agency and his enlarged conception of trusteeship. Significantly, the individual he chose to illustrate his points was neither a clergymen nor an individual conspicuously asssociated with religion or religious institutions.

James Hillhouse was a lawyer, politician, and land developer who had served in a number of important trustee positions, both public and private. most notably as Yale's Treasurer for nearly half a century and as manager of the Connecticut Common School Fund. Hillhouse graduated from Yale College in 1773 and studied law with his uncle, while he secured admission to the bar, his real interest was in real estate development and New Haven politics. He was elected Captain of the local militia, which he commanded in resisting the British invasion of New Haven in 1779. After the war, he was elected to a variety of public offices, including the state legislature and the United States Congress, in which he served as both a representative (1790-96) and senator (1796-1810). Despite his responsibilities in the nation's capital, he remained active as a civic leader in New Haven, where he was the moving force behind the rehabilitation of the city's Green, the creation of the Yale campus, and the founding of the Grove Street Cemetery (the world's first private nonprofit burial ground). In 1810, he left politics to become manager of the Connecticut Common School Fund, an endowment intended to support the state's public schools on the proceeds of the sale of western lands.

When Hillhouse took charge of the fund it had been so "had so diminished in value as to excite in the minds of the people a serious apprehension that in a few years it, would become comparatively useless if not utterly extinct" (Bacon 1860, 30). The fund "consisted chiefly of the debts due from the original purchasers of the Western Reserve, and those substituted securities which had been accepted in their stead." Debtors owing payments to the fund "were dispersed in different States, and over a territory several hundred miles in extent; and such were the embarrassments of very many, and the complicated derangement of their affairs, that little but their ruin and the loss of the claims of the State could be expected, from legal coercion" (Bacon 1860, 30). Restoring the integrity of the fund would require not only extraordinary financial acumen, but also, as collecting debts across a variety of jurisdictions in an era of legal primitivism, would demand great personal and political skill,

Bacon took pains to show how Hillhouse's efforts were informed not only by a desire to restore the fund, but by "a benevolent regard to individual interest, and an enthusiastic devotion to the public good" (Bacon 1860, 31). Many of those indebted to the fund were, as Bacon noted, "families, and among them the widows and orphans of deceased debtors,

whose property had become encumbered by mortgages, contracts, and peculations, and their hopes broken, and their exertions paralyzed, by the apparently inextricable condition of their affairs" (Bacon 1860, 31). "The relation of debtor and creditor," Bacon wrote

> is not favorable to friendship, especially when the debtor is bankrupt or on the verge of bankruptcy. . . . But Mr. Hillhouse made the debtors of the School Fund friends, by making himself their friend. Instead of acting against them as the mere attorney of an adverse party, he was their adviser, and acted with them and for them. The forbearance which he (with powers almost unlimited, save by his own fidelity to his trust) was able to exercise towards embarrassed but honest debtors, the legal and financial counsel he was so well qualified to give, and the aid which, in one way or another, he could so often tender when the claims of other creditors were pressed too urgently -- were all at the service of his great and kindly heart. Thus while he was far more careful for the safety of the Fund than if it had been his own, he became the benefactor of debtors who could not have extricated themselves from their embarrassments by any efforts of their own, and in whose final insolvency the State would have been a losing creditor (Bacon 1860, 31-32.

Hillhouse, in Bacon's account, saw himself not merely as a fiscal agent, but as a moral one, whose obligations extended to helping his fellow citizens and restoring them to solvency. He did this at immense personal risk, trekking through the western wilderness for a decade and a half. Rather than leaving a legacy of anger and bitterness towards a creditor, he left gratitude and prosperity -- while at the same time restoring a fund that "secures a free school in every neighborhood and within the reach of every family, and leaves hardly a native adult that cannot read and write" (Bacon 1860, 36).

On resigning from the Common School Fund, Hillhouse became the chief promoter of the effort to build the Northampton Canal, a project that hoped to divert Connecticut Valley trade through New Haven. He oversaw its construction and invested extensively in real estate along its route in the expectation that New Haven would reap a rich commercial harvest.

Looking over Hillhouse's long career as civic leader and public servant, Bacon concluded that his life was a lesson in the importance of "a man's character" and "the force with which he has acted upon his fellow-men." "Had he been a selfish man," Bacon wrote,

> had his nature lacked the glow and charm of living sympathies -- the development and organization of his entire character would have differed from what it was. His spontaneous and genial affectionateness, not only in his family but in every relation -- his frank heartiness in all intercourse with friends and neighbors -- his ready sensibility to whatsoever things are true or honest or just, or pure, or lovely or of good report in a word, the generosity of his nature, even more than the undoubted superiority of his intellectual powers, commanded the full confidence of all who had to do with him and of all who knew him. What was admired and honored in James Hillhouse was, not the man's extraordinary ability -- not his eloquence or his wit -- not the depth and reach of his learning, or the acuteness and power of

> his logic, -- but the man himself. It was his integrity, in the original and largest sense of that word -- the wholeness of his manly nature with all manly affections and sympathies as well as manly powers, that commanded homage (Bacon 1860, 43).

The most important aspect of his character and the one most informed by his religious convictions was "his habitual regard for other interests than his own." "As he was not living for himself," Bacon wrote (with implicit reference to his own ideas about stewardship),

> it was the easier for him to be magnanimous under any personal wrong. Not only so, but the largeness of the plan on which he lived, helped to lift him above the depression of whatever personal disappointments and sorrows were in his lot, and to illuminate the entire sphere of his activity and his enjoyments. In words that were spoken at his burial, "He aimed at the public good. He lived for his country. Thus his activity was activity freed from the corrosion of selfishness, and in all his toil there was a consciousness of noble purposes which lightened every labor, and even took away from disappointment the power to vex him. Thus his soul was expanded into more colossal dimension, his being, as it were, spread out and extended. There was more of existence in a day of his life than there would be in centuries of some men's living. His influence, his voluntary influence to do good, being thus extended, he lived with a sort of ubiquity, wherever that influence was felt, -- happy in the consciousness of living to good purpose. " (Bacon 1860, 45-46).

What makes Bacon's biography of Hillhouse especially important is his emphasis on public consequences of private beliefs. Bacon used Hillhouse's life as a way of illustrating his ideas about moral agency, focusing on the ways in which religious convictions could infuse every aspect of a man's life and work. In a very real sense, the biography is a literary example of the "luminism" of American artists in the Ante Bellum decades. Just as painters came to depict commonplace scenes in ways which made them seem illuminated from within -- not merely as a visual effect, but as a statement about nature as an expression of God's handiwork --, so Bacon depicted Hillhouse as a man whose every act, public and private, was moved and shaped by his faith.

To accomplish this task of evoking the essence of the trustee as "the public spirited citizen in a republic," Bacon was as much artist as historian. He unquestionably suppressed what he knew about the details of Hillhouse's rather questionable political dealings in forging the 1792 "Act of Union" between the state and Yale (whose primary purpose was to increase the coercive power of the Federalist establishment and to silence public opposition) as well as his scandalous mismanagement of Yale's funds in connection with the failure of New Haven's Eagle Bank -- which virtually wiped out the college's endowment and forced it to initiate the first general purpose endowment fund drive). But we should remind ourselves that Bacon's purpose in doing this was not to distort the past -- for he really was not acting as historian, but as mythmaker. And, very likely, he regarded Hillhouse's *enduring* legacy -- the style of far-sighted leadership and public spiritedness embodied in the seedlings planted by Hillhouse for future generations that, by Bacon's time had grown into mighty trees -- were what required public attention.

Bacon and the Struggle for Control of Yale

In the aftermath of the Civil War, American business leaders, enriched with war profits, sought to expand their influence into new domains -- among them higher education.

Despite dramatic changes in other aspects of American society during the first half of the nineteenth century, the colleges remained largely unchanged from colonial times: almost without exception, their faculty and administrators were clergymen and their curricula remained strictly classical and religious, resisting the study of modern languages, history, or the social and natural sciences.

Boston businessmen had been exerting pressure on Harvard to change since the 1840s, when industrialist Abbott Lawrence endowed the Lawrence Scientific School. Although part of Harvard, the scientific school offered a parallel (and, many believed) curriculum. Yale followed suit, when railroad executive Joseph Earl Sheffield endowed the Sheffield Scientific School in 1854.

Although Harvard's major governing board, "the Corporation," had been in the hands of the city's business leaders for decades, the members of its secondary board, "the Overseers," were the governor, lieutenant-governor, and senior legislators who served *ex officio*. As the college became more dependent on alumni generosity, pressure grew for giving graduates voice in the governance of the institution. In 1865, the college's charter was changed to allow the alumni to elect members of the board of Overseers.

Yale's governance structure was slightly different from Harvard's. It had a single board, the "Yale Corporation," ten of whose members (the "successor trustees") were all Connecticut Congregationalist clergymen and eight of whom were the governor, lieutenant-governor, and six senior members of the state senate serving *ex officio.*

When outgoing Yale president Theodore Dwight Woolsey proposed that the college follow Harvard's lead by replacing the *ex officii* with elected alumni reprresentatives (Woolsey 1866), a fierce conflict broke out between those who favored the continuing control of the Yale Corporation by the ministry and a militant group of New York alumni, "Young Yale," who wanted to secularize both the curriculum and the governance of the college.

The speech given by Young Yale leader, New York corporate lawyer William Walter Phelps, gives a fair idea of the tone of the conflict:

> The younger alumni are not satisfied with the management of the college. They do not think that in any thing, except scholarship, does it keep progress with the age. . . . The college wants a living connection with the world without -- an infusion of some of the new blood which throbs in every vein of this mighty Republic -- a knowledge of what is wanted in the scenes for which Yale educates her children -- this living connection with the outer world -- this knowledge of the people's wants, can be acquired only from those who are in the people, and of the people. This great want can be supplied only by the Alumni. Put them into your government. Get them from some other State than Connecticut -- from some other profession than the ministry. Call them, and they will gladly and eagerly come -- call them, and with the reform will pass away every appearance of alumni coldness and indifference. . . . Believe me, men who

> sit on the Supreme bench, who control the cabinet of the executive -- who in all moral and intellectual reforms are the leaders of their countrymen; Yale men, who got their training here, and are as able to manage its affairs as Rev. Mr. Pickering, of Squashville, who is exhausted with keeping a few sheep in the wilderness, or Hon. Mr. Domuch, of Oldport, who seeks to annul the charter on the only railway that benefits his constituency (Phelps 1870).

Moral philosopher Noah Porter, who assumed leadership of the defense of tradition, gave as good as he got, charging that "the plans suggested are fraught with possibilities of danger and evil" and pointing out the shortcomings of secular morality; lay governance, by businessmen and lawyers would, he argued, produce the kind corruption common in the era of Boss Tweed. Porter was contemptuous of Young Yale's claims about the superiority of pragmatic over academic knowledge. "They are busily engaged in pursuits which draw their thoughts away from" college life," Porter wrote. Their busy pursuits

> give them little opportunity for reflection on the great subjects of education. At the end of five, or ten, or twenty years, therefore, they have, by the very necessities of life, lost their powers of passing an intelligent judgment on questions which arise in regard to the progress or interests of the institution with which they were once familiar as students. They have become unqualified, for the same reason, to decide intelligently who are the best persons to be chosen for the management of its affairs (Porter 1870).

"The highest interests of the College is influenced by the character of the men composing its Board of Trustees," Porter concluded; in his view, the lay alumni were not men of character.

Not surprisingly, Leonard Bacon was an active partisan in this conflict. Writing under the pseudonym Timothy Pickering, he wrote an article for *The New Englander* titled "A Voice from Squashville" which responded directly to Phelps's charges. Bacon defended Yale's religious mission and the competence of the clergy to govern the college. He bitterly attacked Harvard, which Phelps looked to as a model:

> Harvard, after the fashion of a New York dry-goods jobbing house, sends out 'drummers' to beat up for customers. . . . Harvard makes her commencements attractive to the high culture of her alumni by obtaining the presence of Lord Lacklaw and Senator Blower; while Yale offers nothing more sensational than a discourse from the illustrious President of Princeton. Harvard puts great poets and historians into her vacant professorships,--while Yale generally takes for professors in her Academical Faculty young men whom she herself has trained in the business of college teaching. . . (Bacon 1870, 681).

"In our way of thinking," Bacon declared, highlighting Yale's role as a religious institution and contrasting it to secular Harvard,

> the value of a student is measured by what he is, and not by his father's official or social position, nor by the wealth which he is expected to inherit. The glory of a college is not in the parentage of the boys who go into it, but in the cultured manliness of the men who come out of it (Bacon 1870, 682).

Bacon was particularly incensed by a letter in *The Nation* written by an anonymous Young Yale partisan which represented the rebels real complaint: "We think ministers are, as a class, men of second-rate ability, and that there are few of them who are not inefficient in thought, narrow-minded, and in the true sense of the word, uncultivated" (Bacon 1870, 684). "The profession which they [Young Yale] ignorantly disparage is preeminently -- as compared with other professions which require both general and special culture -- *the* learned profession," he argued, referring to the fact that most physicians and attorneys of the period could receive professional certification without undergraduate degrees and, indeed, without any academic training at all. But beyond academic preparation, the clergy were, in Bacon's view, especially suited to teaching (and governing) college because of their religious callings, which enabled them to engage "questions that bring the science of mind and the sciences of duty and all the departments of social science into an intimate relation with the government of God and with the hope of redemption" (Bacon 1870, 688). In addition, clergy were not only

> that he may know how to think, but not the less that he may know how to make others think. The art which he is to practice in life is, the art of teaching and persuading, not only by the methods of public discourse, but in all the ways of intercourse with individual minds--the art of awakening thought, of guiding inquiry, of comforting sorrow, of touching the deepest sensibilities, and of bringing Divine realities into effectual contact with human consciousness. . . (Bacon 1870, 688).

The theme which connects all of Bacon's writings on associations and their governance, from *The Christian Doctrine of Stewardship in Respect to Property* (1832), through "Responsibility in the Management of Societies" (1847) and *Sketch of the Life and Public Services of Hon. James Hillhouse of New Haven* (1860), to "A Voice from Squashville," is Bacon's belief in the centrality of faith to moral agency. Whether engaging in "THE BUSINESS OF DOING GOOD" through associations or in their occupations, sitting on governing boards, or as citizens in the service of the public, faith was essential right action.

Bacon's Impact and Legacy

Bacon's work is important because it spelled out so clearly the connection between central issues of religious doctrine --such as free will and moral agency -- and the possibilities of voluntary associations. Moreover, Bacon clearly linked together voluntary action as a kind of organizational activity and philanthropy as a way of dealing with wealth in ways that had been only been implicit before. Finally, Bacon recognized and called attention to the quintessentially democratic implications of voluntary associations for philanthropy, noting that what had been the prerogative princes had become possible for anyone.

Most importantly, Bacon's ideas helped to overcome Americans' widespread suspicions of voluntary associations as instruments of special interests. The extent to which people of faith became prominently identified with associations, particularly those -- like the temperance societies and lyceums -- which transcended sectarianism to promote broad civic goals, associations came to be accepted as advancing public rather than private purposes.

Even granting Bacon's significance as a conceptualizer and popularizer, one might well wonder why a minister in a small Connecticut city could have had any really significant impact on thinking about philanthropy and voluntarism nationally. Bacon, after all, was no Beecher -- he stayed in New Haven rather than going West and, while a prolific writer, did not travel the national lecture circuit, as did so many of his contemporaries. To understand Bacon's impact it is necessary to appreciate the importance of Yale and New Haven in American culture during the first half of the nineteenth century. Although not the richest college in the United States, it was certainly the most prolific in terms of numbers of graduates. Although nearly 90% of Yale graduates in 1800 were born in Connecticut, 60% of them left the state (Hall 1982, 310). And its graduates tended to occupy strategically important positions in the national evangelical network. More Yale alumni become college presidents than graduates of any other institution.

In addition to these factors, New Haven was a major publishing center in the Ante Bellum decades, with major markets for its books and pamphlets in the South and West. The result was that volumes like Bacon's *Slavery Discussed in Occasional Essays from 1833 to 1846* (1846) ended up in the hands of western politicians like Abraham Lincoln and profoundly influenced his thinking (Walker 1901, 447-51).

Bacon, moreover, applied his ideas about moral agency to himself: being a "public citizen" was perhaps the central tenet of his career. His keen grasp of organizational processes led him to understand the powerful role of those who interpret organizations to themselves. He became a master of church history and polity and, as a result, an increasingly authoritative figure in adjudicating and settling denominational conflicts (Bacon 1839; 1840a; 1840b; 1861; 1874; 1877). In addition, he was responsible for codifying the administrative practices and procedures of his denomination in ways that both clarified the Congregationalists' denominational identity and institutionalized dispute resolution within the denomination (Bacon 1833; 1843; 1866; 1879). Eventually, according to his biographer, Bacon came to be was "popularly referred to as the 'Congregational Pope of New England'" (Walker 1911, 152).

Bacon also understood the importance of effectively communicating his ideas and the opportunities which new printing and communications technologies offered to adherents of reform. In addition to seeing to it that his sermons and essays were published and widely distributed, he was an active journalist, serving as editor for the *Christian Spectator* from 1826 to 1838, co-founding *The New Englander* (which eventually became the *Yale Review*), and co-founding and editing an influential anti-slavery New York newspaper, the *Independent* from 1848 to 1863. His positions at Yale -- as a member of the Corporation and as professor of divinity helped to further extend his influence.

Thus the pastor of the city's oldest Congregational church -- who published his work, who was active in the evangelical network, and who taught at Yale -- could have extraordinary influence in the circles of people who were thinking about and creating voluntary organizations in the early decades of the nineteenth century.

An additional factor was Yale's centrality in the institutional network of evangelical Protestantism. From the middle of the eighteenth century on, Connecticut's major export was its human population. From its marginal farms and languishing seaports, thousands of Connecticut natives migrated to the South, to New York, and to the upper Midwest seeking opportunities, carrying with them their Congregationalist faith. For many of them, Yale College was

the stepping off point: a young man with an education that equipped him to preach and teach or practice law or medicine had an advantage over those without skills or capital. Alexis De Tocqueville acknowledged the impact of this extraordinary diaspora in *Democracy in America*:

> A single fact will suffice to show the prodigious number of individuals who thus leave New England to settle in the wilds. We were assured in 1830 that thirty-six of the members of Congress were born in the little state of Connecticut. The population of Connecticut, which constitutes only one forty-third part of that of the United States, thus furnished one eighth of the whole body of representatives. The state of Connecticut itself, however, sends only five delegates to Congress; and the thirty-one others sit for the new western states (De Tocqueville, 1945, I: p. 294).

Especially after 1800, many of these migrants, inspired by the urgency of the second Great Awakening, were determined to help rechurch America in order to preserve republican institutions. With them, they brought not only churches and schools, but a desire to tie western and southern settlements into an evangelical network anchored in New England.

As the Vatican of New England Congregationalism, Yale was central to this effort. Not only was the college the largest American institution of higher education by the early nineteenth century, it was the only college which both recruited students nationally, but sent most of its graduates out of state. In 1828, Yale's leaders committed themselves to provide students with "the *discipline* and the *furniture* of the mind;" to give them the values and "balance of character," that would enable them not only to successfully pursue their occupations, but to fulfill a broad range of duties "to his family, to his fellow citizens, to his country" in ways enabling "to diffuse the light of science among all classes of the community." "Our republican form of government renders it highly important," the Yale Report of 1828 concluded, "that great numbers should enjoy the advantage of a thorough education."

> In this country, where offices are accessible to all who are qualified for the, superior intellectual attainments out not to be confined to any description of persons. *Merchants, manufacturers*, and *farmers*, as well as professional gentlemen, take their places in our public councils. A thorough education ought therefore to be extended to all these classes. It is not sufficient that they be men of sound judgment, who can decide correctly, and give a silent vote, on great national questions. Their influence upon the minds of others is needed; an influence to be produced by extent of knowledge, and the force of eloquence. Ought the speaking in our deliberative assemblies be confined to a single profession? If it is knowledge, which gives us the command of physical agents and instruments, much more is it that which enables us to control the combinations of moral and physical machinery. . . .

For Yale's leaders, the goal was not only to make higher education accessible, but to make it broadly influential. "The active, enterprising character of our population," the Report concluded,

> renders it highly important, that this bustle and energy should be directed by sound intelligence, the result of deep thought and early discipline. The greater the impulse to action, the greater is the need of wise and skillful guidance. When nearly all the ship's crew are aloft, setting the topsails, and catching the breezes, it is

> necessary there should be a steady hand at the helm. Light and moderate learning is but poorly fitted to direct the energies of a nation, so widely extended, so intelligent, so powerful in resources, so rapidly advancing in population, strength, and opulence. Where a free government gives full liberty to the human intellect to expand and operate, education should be proportionally liberal and ample. . . .

Yale determined to recruit its students nationally and to send them out to towns and cities everywhere -- "*Merchants, manufacturers*, and *farmers*, as well as professional gentlemen, take their places in our public councils." The College seems to have been as good as its word: for graduating classes between 1830 and 1860, fewer than a third of Yale's alumni resided in New England, while a third settled in the Middle Atlantic region, with the balance split between the South and West.

Where Yale men went, New England institutions followed. The prevalence of voluntary associations in the upper Midwest was due in no small part to groups of graduates, like the "Yale Band" of the 1820s, who set out from determined to establish higher education in the West. (Their success led Yale to be known as the "Mother of Colleges").

As pastor of New Haven's most prestigious congregation, as a long-time member of the Yale faculty, as chief organizer of Congregationalism as a denomination, and as an energetic reform journalist, and as a prolific author (he published more than a hundred books and pamphlets -- and countless articles -- during his lifetime), Bacon was bound to have an outsized influence. The sheer fact of his longevity added to his influence: he was born as Jefferson was beginning his first administration; he entered the pulpit during the presidency of John Quincy Adams; he lived through the Civil War and died during the first administration of Grover Cleveland (1885-1889). During a public career stretching more than half a century, Bacon was read and heard by thousands.

Why, then, isn't Bacon remembered today for his contributions to our understanding of associations and their governance? Though not a household word, he is not entirely forgotten. Clyde Griffin's important 1960 monograph, *Moral Stewardship in the United States, 1800-1865,* one of the studies underwritten by Merle Curti's Ford-funded effort to produce scholarship on American philanthropy, devoted significant attention to Bacon and his ideas. He is frequently mentioned in the standard histories of American Protestantism and the politics of the anti-slavery movement.

Curiously, however, he is absent from most historical accounts of the development of the nonprofit sector. This has doubtless been due to the reluctance, until recently, of most nonprofits scholars to acknowledge the importance of religious institutions in the sector and the role of religion in moving people to give, volunteer, and organize associations.

This secular bias is particularly evident in scholarship on governance and accountability, which has overwhelmingly favored legalistic and group process approaches to governance problems over the spiritualized "servant leadership" perspectives developed by Robert Greenleaf and others (see, for example, Greenleaf 1977; Lance, n.d.).

If Bacon is gone, he is not entirely forgotten. His influence, embedded in the practices of institutions like Yale University, where he spent his life as a student, professor, and member of the corporation, remains strong. I was reminded of this fact many years ago when I asked Kingman Brewster, then president to the university, to define what he meant by the term

"trustee." He replied, "a trustee is an individual who follows the dictates of the conscientious intellect."

This notion of the trustee as an individual accountable not to stockholders or stakeholders, but to his own conscience, would have pleased Bacon.

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THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF STEWARDSHIP IN RESPECT TO PROPERTY.

A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE REQUEST

OF THE

YOUNG MEN'S

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY,

OF

NEW-HAVEN, CONN.

BY LEONARD BACON,
Pastor of the First Church in New-Haven.

NEW-HAVEN:
PRINTED BY NATHAN WHITING.
1832.

SERMON.

ACTS IX. 6.

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

YOU all remember by whom, and on what occasion, these words were spoken. There dwelt at Jerusalem, when the gospel was first published there, a young man whose name was Saul. He had enjoyed the best opportunities, in respect to education, which that country in those times afforded. Such were his native powers of eloquence, and the various talents with which he was endowed; such was the energy with which he applied himself to whatever he attempted; and such was the extent of his learning, and the diversity of his attainments, that he bid fair to win the palm from every competitor, and to attain the highest distinctions among his countrymen. When he began to hear the gospel, he encountered it with the most decided opposition. That course was then, as it has often been since, and as it now is, perhaps not far from here, a broad path to preferment and honor. When the popular hatred of christianity broke out in acts of bloody violence, and the first martyr was stoned, calling on God, and committing his spirit to the Lord Jesus,

Saul bore an eminent part in the cruel tragedy. In the persecution which followed, he led the van, pursuing the disciples even to strange cities. But on his journey to Damascus—as you remember—whither he was going, the armed and commissioned destroyer of the new heresy, that eternal purpose which had fixed on him as a chosen vessel to bear the name of Jesus before the Gentiles, arrested him; and in a moment he was changed. The bitter opposer became a believer; the proud aspiring Pharisee was transformed into a humble disciple of the cross; and he who had made havoc of the church, was ready to be bound and also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" This question was the first utterance from the lips of the subdued and renovated Saul. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He was no longer his own, but the servant, the property of Jesus whom he had persecuted. All his aspiring purposes, all his strong hopes of distinction among his countrymen, were abandoned, all his advantages for the attainment of those purposes were relinquished; what things were gain to him he counted loss for Christ. All his talents, his eloquence, his learning, his power and skill to move the minds of men, were henceforth devoted to the work of his Savior and Lord; for him to live was Christ. How he spent the remainder of his life—how he traveled from province to province and from nation to nation, publishing the gospel—how he denied himself in respect to ease, safety, rest, and all the comforts sensual and refined which might have been his—how he encountered contempt, hatred, popular rage, imprisonment, and death, in this service—is familiar to you all. From that hour when the young and fiery persecutor became a disciple, to the hour when the ax of the executioner descended on the venerable neck of the "chief of the apostles," and he who at Jerusalem had kept the garments of those that murdered Stephen, poured out his own blood in the same cause upon the sands of Rome—the whole course of his life showed how truly and entirely he had devoted himself to the service of his God and his Redeemer.

In all this, Paul did no more than his duty. He gave himself, with all his talents and faculties, to the business of advancing the glory of God and the happiness of man; and did you ever imagine that in all this he did more than God would have him do? Was it ever dreamed that in all this he did more than his obligations to his Creator and Sovreign, to his Redeemer, the author and finisher of his faith, and to his miserable fellow-men, required him to do? If he had done less—if he had spared himself those toils—if he had shunned those perils—if he had shrunk from those privations, and declined those acts of self-denial, would it have been all just as well? Would it have been right in the sight of God, or in the view of an enlightened conscience? Would it have accorded with the spirit and the express claims of the Christian religion? No man in his senses ever thought so.

But what has this to do with the particular subject which we are invited to consider this evening? Much every way. The subject respecting which the Committee of the Young Men's Benevolence Society have desired that instruction and counsel may be given on this occasion from the oracles of God,—is THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF STEWARDSHIP IN REGARD TO PROPERTY. The question is, *What is the right use of property on Christian principles?* And with this question, that exemplification of Christianity, which we see in the conversion of Paul, and in his subsequent history, has much to do. Suppose that the young man who was converted on his way to Damascus, instead of being a man

of learning and eloquence and intellectual power, had been a man of wealth, traveling for pleasure, or a man of business, traveling in pursuit of gain, would not his conversion have been still the same sort of a change?—would not the first emotion of the soul submitting to the Savior have been still, Lord what wilt thou have me to?—would not the principle of practical Christianity have been the self-same thing in this case as in the other? Saul the pupil of Gamaliel, was rich in intellectual endowments, skilful to debate and to persuade; and all that wealth and skill, he regarded as belonging to his Lord. Had his possessions and his faculties been of another sort—had he been rich in this world's goods, and skillful in the management of business, would not the same spirit have led him to consecrate this wealth and this skill, with the same earnest self-denying devotion, to the same great cause? Is a man any more accountable to God for the use of one talent than for the use of another? Is a man in one situation bound to devote himself with all that is his, to the service of his God and his Redeemer; and in another situation does that obligation cease to be binding? Is Christian principle one thing in a man of education and intellectual power; and is it altogether another thing in the man of property and of talents for the honest acquisition of wealth? Or is it one thing in him who is called to preach the gospel; and altogether another thing in the Christian whose station in the house of God is private? Is not every man bound to regard himself and all that is his as belonging to the Lord, and bound always to ask in regard to every one of his possessions and faculties, whatever they may be, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

The doctrine then which I regard the scriptures as teaching on this subject may be thus stated, *Every man is bound to regard all his property, and all the avails of his industry and enterprise, as belonging to God; he is to hold it all, and manage it, as a sacred trust for which he must give account to the supreme proprietor; he is to apply it and dispose of it exclusively as the Lord's servant, and in the work of the Lord.*

In support of this doctrine, our appeal is directly and solely to the scriptures. And while that testimony is presented, let me beg you to remember that it is the testimony of the word of God; and that, whatever it proves, from that you cannot withhold your assent or your obedience, without virtually rejecting the authority of the Bible. The design of the present discourse, you see, is not excitement but instruction. I speak not to passion or blind emotion, but only to the understanding and the sense of obligation. Man of wealth! Man of business! will you hear the word of God?

I. First then, let me refer you to that clear and impressive exhibition of the doctrine of responsibility, which is given from the lips of Christ himself in the well known *parable of the talents.* I need not repeat here the words of the parable; you may examine them at your leisure in the twenty fifth chapter of Matthew.* The parable is briefly this. A nobleman, the master of many servants, going into a far country, distributes his property among his servants, in unequal portions, to be kept by them and managed according to their ability during his absence. After a long time, he returns and reckons with them. One and another comes and reports how he has employed his master's property, bringing with him the avails of his industry and skill added to the original stock; and each receives from his lord an applauding sentence, and a large and happy recompense. But there is one who has buried his one talent in the earth, and has done nothing. Him the master meets with stern rebuke and fearful condemnation. And this story is told expressly to illustrate the re-

* See also Luke xix. 12—26.

lation of men to the great proprietor and judge of all. Are you at any loss to understand its meaning, or to perceive its application to the subject now in hand? Why this parable is so familiar, and its meaning in another application so obvious, that from it is derived one of the most common expressions in our language. How often is the word talent used to denote mental endowments. How often is it said that this man or that man has great talents, superior talents, splendid talents—how often is it said that another man has talents of a lower order. Now this common word, even in this most common use of it, is borrowed from the parable before us; and whenever it is used, it whispers of the time when he who is the Lord of all men, and from whom they have received all their faculties and powers, shall come to reckon with them. You who deem yourself a man of talents, and whose highest aim is to make yourself distinguished by those talents, are you aware that every time this favorite word falls from your lips, or comes into your thoughts, it speaks of your responsibility to God who entrusted you with these endowments? But this, though the most common, is not the only, no nor the most obvious application of the parable. All that God gives to men—all their faculties of body and mind—all their possessions of whatever name—all the means by which they can influence each other—all that they have, in the use of which they can praise him and advance his cause and kingdom—all these things are the talents which God has entrusted to men as his servants, and for the use or perversion of which they must severally give account when he shall come to reckon with them.

What then is the right use of property? What does the parable teach us on this particular subject? We answer, Your property is not your own but God's, and as his you are to use it. In respect to your neighbor it is your own. No

man, no body of men, ecclesiastical or civil, has a right to take it from you. You hold it by a title which may be defended against all the world. But in respect to God it is not yours—it is his. All that property which you have now in possession, and all that which by your industry and enterprise, or in the changes of Providence you may hereafter acquire, is the property of God. You hold it only as his steward. He gives it to your keeping with the commission, Occupy till I come. Look forward then to his coming—look forward to the hour when you must give account of the manner in which you have employed all your property, down to the last fraction, and judge for yourself how you ought to use it.

II. In further confirmation of our doctrine, I may next refer you to those numerous passages in the New Testament which speak of the wide and comprehensive duty of being entirely devoted to God. Our limits will permit us to bring forward only a few texts out of the large class here referred to. But those few will be sufficient.

First, then, look at this text, (Rom. xii. 1.) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." What is the extent and force of such an exhortation as this?

Take another passage, (Rom. xiv. 7, 8,) "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself; for whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's." What does this mean? We, as christians, are, of course, the Lord's; our life is devoted to him; we live in his service and in that service we are ready to die. What light does this throw on the passage previously cited.

But let us look farther into this sort of testimony. (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.) "What! know ye not that your body is the

temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are his." Remember we are looking for instruction respecting the right use of property on christian principles; and what do we find here? Why we find the apostle urging on his christian brethren the practice of the great christian principle of devotedness, in this sweeping and emphatic style. "What," as if astonished that the thing could be forgotten or overlooked for a moment, "What! know ye not that ye are not your own? glorify God in your bodies and spirits which are his."

Look again, and see how the same sentiment is elsewhere exhibited in a form still more distinct and impressive. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.) "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again." Such is the apostle's inspired idea of the great principle of christian devotedness; it is a principle which impels the believer to *live*—to devote his very existence—not unto himself but unto one who died out of love to him, and who yet is alive again to witness his grateful service, and to be pleased with that living sacrifice which he renders in return. And so literal and so comprehensive is this devotedness, that the apostle almost immediately adds the inference, "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." It is his entire and practical devotedness, you will observe, to the service of God his Redeemer, which makes him a new creature. What is the use, think you, which a man, moved by such impulses, controlled by such a principle, will make of his property.

One more short sentence. (Col. iii. 23.) "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

This was originally addressed to slaves, and it tells them that even in the toils of their degraded condition—even when fulfilling the commands of their imperious masters, they were to act as in the sight of God, and as his servants, and were to be governed by religious motives. If such a direction was applicable to those wretched slaves, how much more is it applicable to the enlightened and spirited freeman. And to whomsoever applied, it shows how comprehensive, how minute, how perpetually present are the claims of the christian religion. It shows how Christian principle, the great practical principle of devotedness to God, the settled purpose of serving him, and pleasing him, and honoring him, ought to govern the soul in every relation and every action of life. Need I tell what bearing this has on our inquiry.

How, let me ask, before leaving this part of the testimony—how will that man use his property who is thus thoroughly and practically devoted to the service and praise of God, and whose heart is ever open and alive to the impulse of all the motives by which such devotion is inspired? How will that man use his property who has the spirit of him who went about doing good, who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, and whose rule of action was, "I must work the work of him that sent me while it is day," "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." How will that man use his property, whose heart kindles with the spirit of heaven, where crowned saints and kingly seraphim lay down their crowns at the feet of the Redeemer, and his perpetual service is their perpetual delight? Answer me these questions, and I will tell you, that, and that only, is the right use of property on christian principles.

III. But we may find instruction more explicit by turning to some of those passages in which property is directly spoken of, and its uses and abuses are expressly stated.

The first text then of this class to which I invite your attention, is that account which is given by Matthew (xix. 16—26.) of a young man having great possessions who came to Christ with the question, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" To him the answer was, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me." You know what the result was, "When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful." Notice now Christ's commentary on this incident. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kindom of God." "Who then can be saved," was the exclamation of the astonished disciples. Now this has an obvious bearing on the subject of our present inquiry. Was the Son of God capricious in demanding so much of this young ruler? If not, then he requires the same thing of you. I do not assert that it is the duty of every man actually and literally to dispossess himself of all that he has, and to scatter it with a careless profusion among all who are willing to take it; but I do say that the spirit of the direction given to this young man is applicable to all. Every man, be his possessions what they may, is bound to regard all that he has as a trust to be employed in the service of him who went about doing good, who came to seek and to save that which was lost, and whose self-denying follower he must become if he would enter into life.

Look next to what is said under the head of riches in the sermon on the mount. (Matt. vi. 19—21.) "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor

rust corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." How are we to lay up treasure in heaven? "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." "Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days." "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." What does Christ mean, think you, when he says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth," "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." If you are still at a loss, let me direct you to his testimony on another occasion.

In the context of the passage now proposed for examination, (Luke xvi. 9—12.) Christ is urging on his hearers the importance of forecast and preparation in reference to their wants in the world to come. He tells of the prudence of the unjust steward who, when he saw that his stewardship was about to cease, resolved to make such a use of it while it lasted, that his master's creditors should receive him into their houses. "The children of this world," says the Savior, in the application of this story, "are wiser, in their generation, than the children of light. And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, (or in words better expressing the spirit of the original) make yourselves friends with these deceitful riches, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." That is, So use these fleeting possessions as to be sure of having friends in heaven. Christ afterwards speaks further on the same subject. "If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon—if you have not used faithfully this deceitful and vanishing wealth—who will commit to your trust the true riches?" If you will not serve God faithfully in the use of these talents, let common sense say whether you can with any propriety be entrusted in those higher and more

splendid departments of his service to which the saints are called in heaven. He puts the interrogation in still another form. "And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's," in that which is only lent you* as it were, committed to your keeping for a few days, "who shall give you that which is your own," who shall entrust you with wealth untold to be yours forever. Tell us now, what does this passage teach about the use of property! What but that it is a loan, a sacred trust, and is to be used as such with a minute and scrupulous fidelity? What but that on the use which we make of it, depends our admission into everlasting habitations?

Another passage throws perhaps a still stronger light upon this subject. (1 Tim. vi. 17—19.) "Charge them that are rich in this world" "that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." This is the christian use of property. Use it to lay up in store a good foundation against the time to come. Lay it up, not on earth where a thousand changes may sweep it away; but in heaven where it shall be secure forever. If you would not lose it, spend it. If you would not leave it behind you, send it before you. If you would not have it swept away from you, lay it all up, beyond the reach of change, in heaven.

There is one more passage which it would be unjust to omit. It stands in connection with that just recited. Turning back a few verses we read, (7—10) "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." O how few, and simple, and moderate, are the wants of a christian whose heart is full of the spirit of his Master. How little of

* Εν τῷ αλλοτρίῳ.

this world's wealth is included in that petition—the only petition we are taught to offer for any earthly good, Give us this day our daily bread. "But they that will be rich," continues the apostle, "fall into many temptations and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some have coveted after, they have erred from the faith and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Read this, with eternity in view, with the love of Christ in view, with his example in view, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. Read it with the groans of a dying world around you, and with voices from heaven calling you to do good as you have opportunity, and to do with your might what your hand findeth to do—and as you read and meditate, say, What is your duty, what your privilege, in regard to the attainment and the use of riches?

These exhibitions of the testimony of scripture on this subject, might be prolonged to almost any extent; but if what has already been cited is insufficient to enlighten the conscience or to decide the determination of the hearer, then surely the further accumulation of such testimony, would be equally unavailing. On this testimony then, I rest the proposition which I have undertaken to sustain. I put it to the sober judgment of every hearer who respects the oracles of God, or who regards at all the decisions of the final day. Are you not bound to regard all your property, with all the avails of your industry and enterprise, as belonging to God? Are you not bound to hold it all, and manage it, as a sacred trust, for which you are accountable to the supreme proprietor? Are you not bound to apply it, and dispose of it, as the Lord's servant, and in the work of the Lord? If you are thus bound, dare you—will you—violate such obligations?

And now, to guard against misapprehension and misrepresentation, let me state in a few words, certain things which are not implied in all that I have said, and which I do not understand the scriptures as teaching at all.

1. I do not mean—let no man represent it as my meaning—that you ought to put your property at the disposal of the church, or to give it over into the hands of ministers. I have said no such thing. The church was not formed to manage the property of its members, or to command their charitable efforts; nor can it show any commission to that effect. You are a steward not for the church, but for God. The property which you have, or may have in possession, belongs to you as an individual and not as a member of the church; and you as an individual, must account for it to the supreme proprietor. Neither have ministers any authority over you in this respect. They are called to preach the word; and they have nothing to do with the disposal of your property, save as in the dispensation of God's word, they enlighten your consciences and help your judgment. You may ask advice and counsel of your minister, if you consider him judicious in such matters; you may ask advice of any other minister, if he be one whom you may properly trouble with your personal affairs; and so you may ask advice of whom you please; but after all, the property is entrusted to your hands, and the first and chief responsibility in regard to it rests on you. Others may advise you; but you must act according to your best discretion, and for your act, you alone are accountable.

2. I have not said that your property belongs, or must be given, to the Missionary society or the Bible society, or to any or every benevolent institution. I say your property is entrusted to your individual keeping, and not to the keeping of any other individual, or of any association whatever. If

you wish to avail yourself of the principle of combination with others, in order to accomplish some important good which separate and unconnected efforts could not so well accomplish; you have a right to do so. And the many benevolent associations of the day, afford you abundant opportunities for the exercise of that right. It is your duty to manage your property and to dispose of it, according to your best judgment, so as to accomplish the greatest possible amount of good. And just so far as in your deliberate and conscientious judgment, you can accomplish more good by combining your contributions and your efforts with those of others, in one and another or in all of these benevolent associations, or in any other way, just so far you are bound to do so. Still, however, your property is your own. The fact, that some other man, or some association of men, might manage it better, and employ it for good ends more effectively than you can, makes it none the less yours—nor gives to any man, or to any association of men, any shadow of proprietorship over that which God has committed to your keeping, and for which he holds you singly responsible.*

Does any one ask what is my meaning? I mean this: You are to do good to all men as you have opportunity. While you are diligent in business, you are to beware of covetousness which is idolatry. While you remember that the hand of the diligent maketh rich, and receive each gift of

* The property which you invest in a partnership or in the shares of a joint stock company, is still *your* property appropriated to a definite purpose in the exercise of your own judgment of what is right and expedient. You make this appropriation, not because the property belongs of right to the company, nor because the company sets up any claim to it, but because you think the investment a judicious one, and on the whole well fitted to answer the purpose which you have in view. So with the property which you put into the treasury of a benevolent association; it is yours, and if you act intelligently you put it there only because you think that you can operate through that channel advantageously for the attainment of a particular benevolent purpose.

God with gladness and thanksgiving; you are to see that you make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, and are to take heed that it be not said to you hereafter, "Thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things." You are to use all that you have, just in that way in which, according to your most serious judgment, you can accomplish the most good—the most for the glory of God, and the most for the happiness of man. You are to be always abounding in the work of the Lord; and never to be weary in well-doing, remembering that in due time we shall reap, if we faint not, and that while he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting, he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption. In a word, yielding your whole heart to the dominion of all the impelling and all the restraining motives of the truth of God, you are to give yourself with all that is yours, to the BUSINESS OF DOING GOOD.

Look around you then, and see what opportunities you have of doing good to all men. There are miseries every where; and you may search out the miserable even here, and bless them. You may deliver the poor that cry, and the fatherless, and him that hath none to help him. You may bring upon yourself the blessing of him that is ready to perish, and cause the widow's heart to sing for joy. You may find the ignorant, and with words and deeds of kindness, you may teach them. You may find the degraded, and by the power of light and love, you may raise them to life as from the dead. In these ways, you may employ not only your time and active energy, but your property, as the servant and steward of God.

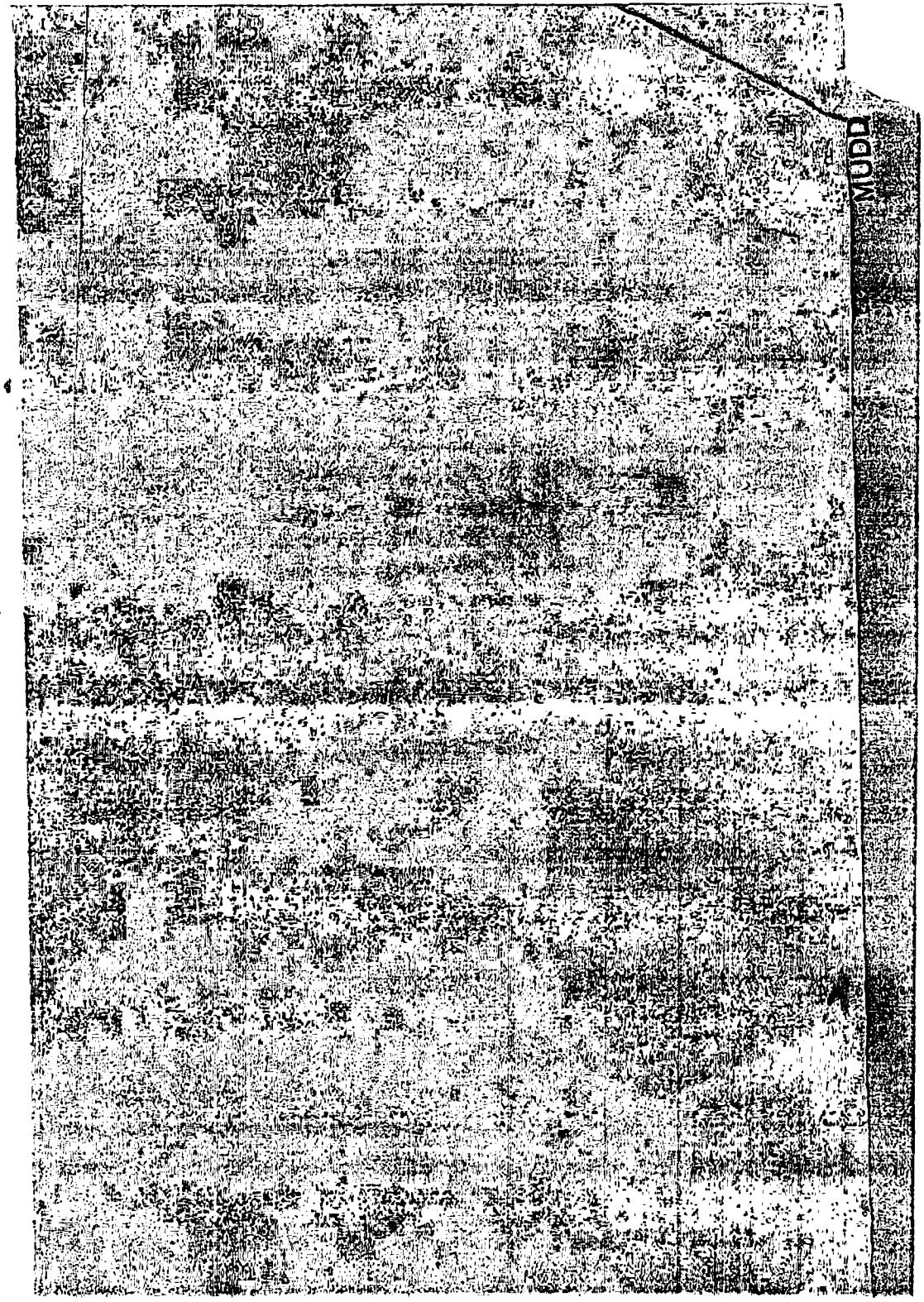
But your views need not be confined to the spot on which you live. You may look abroad over the wide world. You may calculate its wants; you may "take the guage and dimensions" of its misery; and you may set yourself to work

for its renovation. You may send, not your benevolent desires alone, but your actual beneficence, all round the globe. There is no land which your bounty cannot reach—I had almost said, no tribe or family which you cannot help to enlighten and to bless. You may strike off the fetters of the slave, and send him back, a glad freeman, to the land which God gave to his fathers. You may at once bear a part in taming the fierce warrior of the wilderness, and co-operate with ten thousand fellow-laborers in breaking down the idol temples of the east. You may extend the cup of salvation to him who pants beneath the tropics, and at the same time send the genial radiance of the sun of righteousness to cheer the shivering natives of the farthest north. All this is your privilege. It is the privilege of the age which other generations will mark as the era of combined and associated efforts for the salvation of the world.

What opportunities then have you for doing good to all men. The benevolent institutions of these days, gives to the humblest individual the power of doing good to all men, in a sense in which it was once the prerogative of princes. How many holy men of old, as they looked over the world, and, amazed at its miseries, cried, O Lord how long!—would have rejoiced at such a privilege. How would it have cheered them—how would it have made their hearts to overflow with praise—how would it have impelled them to new diligence, new self-denial, new intensity of effort, could they have seen this day. And does this privilege bring with it no proportionate responsibility? Think you that, such a price having been put into your hands, you shall not be constrained to account for it? Are you God's steward; and can you let slip such golden opportunities of applying most effectively for the advancement of his interests, that which he has entrusted to your discretion; and shall you not give a fearful

account of your neglect in the day when you appear before him?

I cannot doubt that the doctrine which I have illustrated and urged in this discourse is the truth, and such truth as commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. I leave it now with every man's own judgment and conscience, praying Him who giveth the increase, to make it effectual by his Spirit.



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RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SOCIETIES.

Our associated enterprises for the propagation of Christianity, at home and abroad, have become almost the greatest of the material and visible interests of the Christian commonwealth. So the world changes. When the London Missionary Society and the Baptist Missionary Society were formed, it was little imagined, even by the most enthusiastic, that in those movements there was the first indication, the first visible stage—we will not say the cause or source—of a new order of things, which in half a century would affect all Christendom, and which would act irresistibly on all the relations of churches to each other, on the development and culture of piety, on the administration of the gospel in the pulpit, and even on theological dogmas. But so it is. The Church Missionary Society in England is the manifestation and the organ of a movement in the Church of England, which Canterbury can not control, and against which Oxford, in her counter-movement, struggles with only a limited success.

We are far from regretting this new order of things in the Christian republic. We have no sighs to breathe for the good old days, as some esteem them, when the spirit of aggression against the empire of darkness, slumbered in the church. There are dangers, no doubt, in an age of activity and of religious enterprises. There is danger, especially, that important truths may be forgotten or undervalued in the zeal and hurry of the movement. But in our view there is more danger on the whole—more danger even to theology, in an age of stagnation. The church awakened to an active sympathy with the design of the gospel, and entering earnestly into the work of the world's conversion, is not more likely to fall into error, than the church inactive and guided by doctors who can only dogmatize and argue. We would have it understood then that when we speak of the change which has come upon Christendom within the last half century, and which is still in progress—the change which has made our great voluntary associations for propagating the gospel so important, we speak no regret that it is so. God grant that the churches may never go back to their "old ways" in respect to effort for the diffusion of the gospel around them, and its extension through the world.

Not only is the magnitude to which some of our leading benevolent societies have attained, far beyond what could have been anticipated by the most sagacious or the most sanguine when the system was originated; but the relations which they hold to churches and pastors by their agencies and publications, and the multiplicity of the interests which they indirectly but powerfully affect, are of such moment as to require constant vigilance against that tendency to perversion which is inseparable from all things human. A vague feeling of the importance of guarding against such perversion —a half suppressed uneasiness about the power which is supposed to be accumulating in the hands of secretaries and executive committees—exists to an extent which makes some inquiry and discussion necessary. In the progress of new enterprises and movements, it is a thing of course that new problems will present themselves for solution —questions that must be settled in the light of new experience.

The trust committed to the executive department of a great benevolent society is a trust in many respects peculiar. Though in most cases it is chiefly in the hands of

ministers of the gospel, it is altogether distinct from the appropriate and higher work of the ministry. It is for the most part that "service of tables" from which the apostles, as ministers of the word of God, desired to be relieved. It requires therefore different gifts from those which are employed in the work of proclaiming and teaching the gospel. This we say not by any means in disparagement of the office, or as desiring to detract from its dignity. On the contrary we hold that it requires, for the full discharge of its duties, not merely the ordinary capacity and integrity of upright business men, but the highest degree of diligence, wisdom, disinterestedness and devotedness. The men who in the providence of God are called to exercise such a "ministry," not of the word but of tables, [διακονία—Rom. xii, 7,] in the Christian community, and who in that service "disburse with simplicity," "rule with diligence," and "perform their ministry of beneficence with cheerfulness," are to be esteemed very highly in love for their work's sake; not less than those who being called to serve the church in the way of preaching [προφητεία] perform that function, each in the proportion of his gifts, the teacher earnestly intent upon his teaching, and he who has the high faculty of persuasion and excitement employing that faculty to the utmost. The special work which Jeremiah Evarts was privileged to do for the church, though it falls into entirely another category from the work of those who labor in word and doctrine, was not on that account necessarily inferior, either in dignity or in usefulness, to the work of the most learned teacher, or of the most eloquent and persuasive preacher, of the age to which he belonged. Those who are now standing in places analogous to that which he occupied in his day, are partakers of a trust which deeply concerns the purity and the freedom as well as the progress and outward advancement of the church. Their office is one which, considered merely as an office, and without reference to the personal endowments of those who happen to hold it, is an office of the highest moment in the religious world. There are men whom God sends into the world to be leaders in the highest sense; men who form and sway opinion, and who control the thoughts and aspirations of their fellow men. The influence of such men is personal rather than official. God gives them endowments by which they make themselves felt in almost any station. To such men, the mechanical advantages of official rank and position, so necessary to men whose endowments however great are of another order, are an encumbrance rather than a help. The stately warrior may need all his equipments, helmet and buckler, sword and spear; and not these only, but the marshaled host and all the art and pomp of war. But God's anointed champion is mightiest in his own unarmed agility and strength; he needs no other weapon than his shepherd's sling and the smooth pebble from the brook. If then it is easy to name men whose influence in the religious world is greater than that of those invested with official power in the greatest and most extended of our voluntary associations, it is equally easy to perceive, the moment they are named, that their influence is personal and not official.

It is with a view not of producing controversy but of forestalling it by timely and amicable discussion, that we have determined to utter, in all Christian freedom, a few thoughts on a question to which the foregoing considerations naturally conduct us. Our question is none other than this,—Ought the executive department of a great voluntary society, for missions or for any similar enterprise, to be really and formally responsible to anybody?—if so, to whom, and how? What we have to

say on this subject is not unconsidered; nor is it inconsiderately uttered. We have observed, within a few years past, that when questions arise in regard to the action or policy of this or that great society, discussion is apt to grow confused because another question underlying the whole debate, has not been duly and clearly adjusted. That other question is, Who are the society?—where is the control? Shall the officers in the executive department govern the whole movement, responsible only to God? Or shall they be under the government of some constituency? And this is the question which we propose for consideration.

For the sake of convenience, and that we may have to do with tangible instances, we will speak of two societies in particular,—the American Board of Foreign Missions, and the American Tract Society. We speak of these two rather than of some others, because these are perhaps the most conspicuous of all our voluntary societies; because they are entirely unlike in the form of their constitutions, and because by the very great diligence and skill with which their affairs have been conducted the "Prudential Committee" and secretaries of the one, and the "Executive Committee" and secretaries of the other, have earned, and have obtained, to an indefinite extent, the confidence of the religious public.

Our question divides itself into two. *First*, Ought the executive administration of these and other like societies to be responsible to anybody? And the responsibility which we are inquiring about, is, on the one hand, not virtual only but formal, and on the other hand, not nominal only but real.

As the groundwork of an answer to this branch of the question, let us recollect a few dry but comprehensive facts. The revenue passing through the treasury of the American Board of Foreign Missions during the last financial year (ending July 31) was $264,807 93, including the interest of $73,098 40 of permanent funds, and not including the rent of $22,613 61 of the same funds vested in the house occupied by the Board for the transaction of its business at Boston. The revenues of the American Tract Society for the financial year ending April 15, 1846, were $153,916 16, including $82,784 00 for publications sold, and excluding the rents of the very valuable property owned by the Society at the corner of Nassau and Spruce streets, New York. The question relates to the responsibility of those to whom all this money is entrusted, and under whose immediate direction it is collected and expended. But the office of those who expend this money by their votes of appropriation, would be entirely dishonored if it were considered in no higher view than as a merely pecuniary trust. It is important then to recollect for what uses these funds are appropriated, and to what extent the operations which they sustain affect the welfare of our country and of the world.

The Prudential Committee of the American Board has under its control, a mission in South Africa, one in West Africa, one in Greece, one in Turkey, one in Syria, one in Persia, five in British India, one in Siam, two in China, one in Borneo and one in the Sandwich Islands; besides nine planted among the Indians of this continent from the Abenaquis of Canada to the new homes of the Cherokees and Choctaws beyond the Mississippi, and from the remnants of the Six Nations in New York, to the intractable and nameless tribes of Oregon. At the ninety-three stations included in these twenty-six missions, there are employed one hundred and thirty-four ordained missionaries, ten of whom are also physicians; five physicians not ordained; twenty-eight assistant missionaries, laboring as

schoolmasters or printers, or in other more secular works connected with the missions; and, including the wives of the missionaries, who are all considered as in the service of the Board and under the direction of the committee, one hundred and seventy-five "female assistant missionaries." All these are Americans; but these are not the only laborers in the missionary field. Twenty-five native preachers, in the various countries occupied by the missions, and one hundred and thirty-two other native helpers (not counting an indefinite number of native teachers of free schools) swell the aggregate of the laborers at the missions, who are principally and directly dependent on the Board for support, to four hundred and ninety-four. These statements, without repeating the details of the number of churches and church members,—the number of schools and seminaries and colleges with their pupils,—the number of printing establishments, the presses and fonts of type, and the type and stereotype foundries,—and the number of languages in which printing is executed at the various missions—will sufficiently refresh the reader's recollections in regard to the extent of the foreign operations of the Board. At the same time, it should be remembered that the domestic operations of the Board must needs be in some proportion to the extent of its operations abroad. During the last year, the expenses in the home department, including agencies for the collection of funds,—publications designed to diffuse missionary intelligence, and to guide the public mind,—the support of three secretaries and a treasurer, all of whom devote their whole time to the business of the institution,—and a variety of miscellaneous expenditures incidental to the work—amounted to $25,798 84, without including the rent of the Missionary House at Boston.

The Executive Committee of the American Tract Society expend a portion of their revenues in foreign countries; though as yet they have sent abroad no missionaries, "colporteurs," or other agents, from this country. Thus their report for the last year, shows appropriations to various evangelical missions in heathen and Mohammedan countries, and to various kindred societies and committees in Europe, amounting in all to $15,000. But to the Tract Society, the great field for its beneficence and power is in our own country. According to the Report before us, one hundred and seventy-five men were in the service of the committee, as "colporteurs," "superintendents of colportage," and "volume agents," for the whole or for various portions of the last year. Some of these men are ministers of the gospel; others are theological students or candidates for the ministry; others are laymen, represented as men of good sense, good information and active religious zeal. But though these men are called by the undignified name of "colporteurs," or pedlers—a name redolent of apostolicity only to those who know not what it means—the itinerant vending of books is by no means their exclusive or their highest function. They might rather be called lay evangelists; for it is their business to preach not only conversationally and from house to house, but in the way of continuous discourse wherever they can gather an assembly. It appears from the treasurer's report, that the expenditures in the "colportage" department, for the last year, including the compensation of one of the secretaries and a clerk, and excluding the cost of books given away,—amounted to $31,043 50. The same report shows that the aggregate expenditure of the year for the manufacture of books and other publications, including what was paid to authors and translators and for revision, was $90,603 91. Another

comprehensive charge is for "services and expenses of general agents," the amount of which is $5,709 45. These general agents, seven in number, devote themselves, each in his own field, "to the work of bringing the various objects, plans and operations of the society before the churches and securing their coöperation;"—in a word, their business is to collect money by preaching and personal solicitation. The extent of the Society's business is indicated by the fact that aside from all that is done in the department of "colportage," which, as we have already seen, gives full employment to one secretary assisted by a clerk, the charge for the services of two other corresponding secretaries, an assistant secretary and assistant treasurer, a depositary, and seven clerks and assistants in the various offices of the Society's house in Nassau street, amounts to $7,884 61; and no man who knows those secretaries can doubt either that they are hard-working men, giving their strength to their business in a self-sacrificing spirit,—or that the assistants and clerks that work under them, are obliged to earn their wages.

Here then we see a yearly revenue of $264,000 controlled by one committee at Boston, and a yearly revenue of $154,000 controlled by another committee at New York; and, in connection with the pecuniary trust, we see under the control of each committee a great system of arrangements for acting on public opinion,—secretaries, agents, anniversaries, presses, and the affection and enthusiasm connected with a great evangelical movement. Our question is, Ought these committees to be, formally and really, responsible to some constituency?

We can not doubt that our readers are prepared, nay were quite ready at the outset, to answer our question in the affirmative. But we would have them distinctly conscious of the reasons why the men that hold such trusts ought to be thus responsible. We do not find those reasons, and we presume our readers will not find them, in any distrust of the individuals who at the present time happen to hold this power; for we have all the confidence in their integrity, their devotedness, and their experience, that can be demanded. Our reasons, on the contrary, are such as these:

1. A true responsibility of the executive to some superior or constituent power, is a security against mismanagement and the gradual perversion of the trust. Security against fraudulent mismanagement is not what we speak of. So far as strict business fidelity is concerned, we do not think that any thing would be lost if the Prudential Committee of the American Board, and the Executive Committee of the American Tract Society, as now existing, were formally authorized to fill all their own vacancies henceforward, and to manage matters at their own discretion, giving only such reports to the public, through the press, and at anniversary meetings, as shall to them seem expedient. As to mere honesty, the members of each committee—seven in one instance and fifteen in the other—may safely enough be left to watch one another as well as their secretaries and the other agents under their control. The danger against which we would guard, is altogether of a different sort. Men acting in any great executive trust, if they are required at stated periods to give a full account of their proceedings, and if they know that their policy is not merely to commend itself to mankind at large by the eclat of its success, but is to be continually reviewed in its details by other minds, will be more likely to act wisely than if they act simply at their own discretion. And should they err, as they easily may, in consequence of devoting their minds too engrossingly to the one

particular interest which they have in hand, their errors are more likely to be immediately discovered and corrected. Great perversions of trusts like these, whenever they occur, are made for the most part unconsciously, gradually, and with the best intentions.

2. We come then to another reason for making the executive administration of these societies, truly and formally responsible to some definite constituency. Such responsibility is a security against the dangerous accumulation of power in a few hands. The grand palladium of political liberty is that there shall be no power, and especially no administrative power, without responsibility. Power, and especially executive power, if placed in irresponsible hands, grows and accumulates till nothing but the violence of revolution can resist it. For the same reason the power which is necessarily involved in the administration of these great societies, and of others like them, and which must necessarily be entrusted to a few hands, should be carefully guarded and bounded by corresponding responsibility. But we need not spend time in the illustration of this point.

3. There is another argument, more pressing if not more important. An irresponsible executive at the head of one of these great movements, is constantly liable to suspicion and assault, and has no legitimate protection. There are men, and in this country of ours they are not insignificant in numbers or in the faculty of making themselves felt, whose instinctive jealousies are kindled at the sight of power, and who can not rest till they have ascertained that there is some adequate security against the possible abuse of it. But it is not from these men only that jealousies may spring up, against an irresponsible executive at the head of an institution like those of which we are speaking. Suppose for example, that some missionary, deeming himself unjustly treated by the committee at Boston, could find no "Board" properly constituted for such business, to hear his complaint or appeal and to decide between him and the committee. Or suppose that when dissatisfaction arises in any quarter respecting the policy pursued by the committee at the Tract House in New York, the dissatisfied party could find no constituent body before which the grounds of its discontent could be fairly and freely discussed, and by which the errors of the committee could be overruled and corrected. How plain is it that in such a case the committee is placed in a most disadvantageous position. It is exposed to jealousy and misrepresentation on every side; but it has no opportunity of meeting its accusers face to face, and defending itself openly and manfully against their erroneous constructions or their unfriendly imputations. It is sensitive to every attack; but it can not reply without some compromise of dignity. And yet that official silence operates at once to irritate the jealousy that ought to be conciliated, and to put new weapons into the hands of opposition. How strong is the temptation in such circumstances—and how unconsciously may it operate—to form a harsh judgment of the motives from which opposition proceeds, and then to act accordingly. How gradually, and in a sense unintentionally, may the whole apparatus of an extended organization, be employed to counteract the efforts, by destroying the influence and reputation, of the refractory individuals who in their self-conceit, or for some bye ends, have dared to embarrass the great and blessed cause.

That these secretaries, then, and these administrative committees, ought to be responsible to somebody, is plain; and the reasons are plain. But to whom, and how? What is the best arrangement for effecting and maintaining the responsibility

that is so desirable? This is the *second* branch of our inquiry.

And here our first position is, that a responsibility to the public at large, or to that portion of the public to which the enterprise looks for support, is not sufficient. Such a responsibility undoubtedly exists in every instance, and undoubtedly its influence is highly salutary. No society can go along any faster, or any further, than it is sustained by public confidence in the quarters to which it looks for pecuniary contributions. In this view, the Board of Missions and the Tract Society, and all similar organizations, are responsible to the Christian community, and it is well in every respect that they are so. Such responsibility, however, is a responsibility of the society itself, as a whole; it is a responsibility which exists in the necessity which the society is under, of commending its object and its methods to the largest possible number of individuals, in order to enlist the largest possible number of supporters and friends. But what we are inquiring after is not the responsibility of the society as a whole, to the public. Our inquiry is rather, who shall *be* the society? Shall the executive administration, to wit, the secretaries and the committee, be the society, and be responsible in that capacity, directly and solely, to the public? Or shall there be a constituent body between the committee and the public, to whom the committee shall be responsible, and who shall therefore be, within certain limits, responsible for the committee? To make the committee responsible only to the public, is as much as to require that all the proceedings of the committee shall be publicly discussed, and that every man who feels himself in any manner aggrieved by their action in any case, or whose judgment differs from theirs on any serious question, shall appeal at once to the tribunal of the public, and shall prosecute his appeal by popular agitation.

But in this idea of responsibility to the public, there is something of a fallacy which it may be worth the while to expose. Doubtless the Executive Committee of the American Tract Society are responsible to the public; that is, whenever the public shall refuse to buy their books or to give them money, the committee will be obliged to abdicate. So is the emperor of Austria responsible to the people whom he governs. Whenever the people in all the provinces and kingdoms of that empire shall take it into their heads to overturn the government, and to run all the risks and make all the sacrifices involved in such a revolution, they can do it. And the emperor, or rather Metternich in his behalf, must needs conduct his administration with that possibility in view, and must consider well what the people will bear and what they will not bear. But he knows very well, and every body knows, that the people will bear a great deal before they will run all the hazards involved in a revolution. And besides all that, he has the means of influencing public opinion, to an unlimited degree, in favor of submission to his measures; and he has the means of making the people submit to many things which they would soon reform if they could utter their thoughts freely and peacefully in a properly constituted representative assembly. Not altogether unlike to this, is the sense in which the executive administration of a great and popular institution is responsible to the public. The object for which that institution exists is a great object; one which thousands of intelligent men, and tens of thousands of good people less intelligent, are not willing to give up because of any slight dissatisfaction with the manner in which the institution is conducted. The withholding of contributions is a desperate remedy and

will not be employed in respect to so great an enterprise, save in extreme cases. And not only so, but the administration of a great and popular society, instead of being passively governed by public opinion, is itself, to an indefinite extent, the creator of public opinion in respect to its own policy: or more exactly, the creator of that public opinion on which it depends for its supplies. The entire system of agencies, correspondence, publications, and anniversary meetings, is a mighty machinery for forming and guiding public opinion. And many a man there is, not particularly deficient in moral courage, nor deficient in wisdom and conscientiousness, who, in any other than an absolutely desperate case, would not dare resist that machinery, for the reason that in so doing he would only throw away his efforts and sacrifice himself to no purpose.

But are not these societies responsible to the churches?—to individual churches, and to those ecclesiastical bodies which may be considered as, in one sense or another, representing the churches? Undoubtedly they are, and undoubtedly this relation between them and the churches is greatly for the welfare of both. But churches and ecclesiastical bodies, considered in reference to any control which they exert over our great societies, are only organs through which public opinion may manifest itself. Responsibility to the churches, then, is only one form of that responsibility to the public, of which we have already spoken; just as responsibility to the press is another form of the same thing. The man who would bring the administrative committee of some great society to account, may write what he would say, and publish it in the newspapers, or in a pamphlet; or, he may set forth his views in a church meeting, or a presbytery, in a consociation or a synod, in a general association or a general assembly; and the struggle which will ensue may serve at least to show whether his personal influence or the official influence of the committee is the greater in that quarter.

There are those who would make this responsibility to the churches more explicit, more methodical, and more complete. Instead of voluntary societies as we call them, they would have ecclesiastical boards to manage all benevolent enterprises. This is the system of the Methodists, and it has been adopted by the Episcopalians, and by the Presbyterians of the Annual Assembly. We have no admiration for such arrangements, and no confidence in them. Some of our "Old School" Presbyterian friends, we believe, are already beginning to suspect that the executive committee of an ecclesiastical board is in no wise better than the executive committee of a voluntary society; and, indeed, that under the new arrangements by which the church, "as such," and "in its distinctive character," was to be a missionary society, and an education society, and a society for publishing books and tracts,—the "church, as such," instead of governing the various executive committees is itself, even "in its ecclesiastical capacity," likely to be governed by them. That the executive committee of the Assembly's Board of Publication is any more really under the control of their churches than the Executive Committee of the American Tract Society, may be doubted without incurring the guilt of temerity; and that it is much more likely to make itself felt as a power in the General Assembly, and in subordinate judicatures, is too plain to be argued. When the churches of New England, having grown weary of Congregationalism, shall desire to establish a strong central government, let them set up at Boston a complete system of ecclesiastical boards for the conduct of all benevolent enterprises;

and they will be as well provided for as the nature of the case will admit.

Some of our readers may possibly entertain the notion that the anniversary public assembly, in the Broadway Tabernacle, or elsewhere, which hears the annual report of the committee, and accepts it by a vote, and orders it to be printed, is the very constituency which we are inquiring for, and that here is a true and sufficient responsibility. Yet we hardly need to say that such meetings are not for business, but for exhibition—far more like a college commencement than like a deliberative assembly. The speeches made are so many orations, salutatory, valedictory, and the like, pronounced for the edification and gratification of the audience, rather than a free inquiry and debate touching the conduct of the committee. The candidate for a bachelor's degree, who should dare, upon the commencement platform, to enter into a free examination of the doings of the college government, would hardly miss the mark more widely than the anniversary orator, who should venture to find fault with the proceedings of the committee by whose favor he was allowed to speak. And if any man whose name was not on the printed schedule, should be so "clean daft" as to rise in his place and bring forth a motion or a speech out of his own private judgment, the huge columns of the Tabernacle would hardly endure the disorder. The conduct of Drs. Smith and Anthon, when, at the bishop's call, they rose in the simplicity of their souls and protested against Mr. Carey's ordination, was not more unrubrical. The best thing that the unlucky wight could do after offering such a speech or motion, would be to follow the example of the two doctors on the occasion referred to, who, when they saw that they had protested to no purpose, took their hats and walked out of the house.

One other form of responsibility remains to be considered. The executive of any such institution may be made responsible to a board of managers. Such an arrangement, properly carried into effect, would leave nothing to be desired which the imperfection of all things human will permit. But in order that it may be properly carried into effect, several things are necessary, which are often disregarded.

1. The board must be the representative body of the society, and must be constituted for that end. The society itself, considered as consisting of all who contribute to the enterprise, can not deliberate—cannot be assembled for the transaction of any business, otherwise than in the fictitious manner of an anniversary meeting. The society, thus considered, cannot be appealed to or argued with, otherwise than through the press. And its approbation or disapprobation of particular measures, can in no way be fairly and indisputably ascertained. The society is the public, and its opinion is public opinion. We say then, that the proper function of a board is that of trustees for the contributors, the living and the dead.

2. The board, then, should be a deliberative body. Its function should not begin and end with electing an executive committee. The annual reports of the administration should be examined by them, and should go forth to the public with their intelligent and deliberate approval. Plainly, then, the board should be so constituted, and its meetings should be so arranged, as to facilitate deliberation and discussion.

3. It must be a select body; not too numerous for the transaction of business, not so numerous as to diminish the sense of individual responsibility in the members, not so numerous, nor so scattered, as to make it likely that those who are present at one meeting will all, or

was not definitely limited in regard to the increase of its members. The consequence is, that the number of members has been inadvertently increased, till the last report shows us a catalogue of one hundred and eighty-six,—full three times as many as there ought to be, and the number is still increasing every year. In this way the sense of individual responsibility on the part of the Commissioners is necessarily weakened. The individual who esteems others better than himself, and therefore esteems himself much less than the one-hundred-and-eighty-sixth part of the corporation, is not half so likely to feel an obligation to attend the meetings, and when attending is not half so likely to exercise his own free judgment, or to bend his powers earnestly to the business in hand, as he would be if the corporation were only half as numerous. Thus, the larger the number of individuals to whom this great trust is committed, the more is the responsibility divided, and the more probable is it that the body will be swayed by the opinions of the secretaries and the committee. We would have the number of Commissioners reduced as soon as practicable, to not more than sixty. Forty would be still better.

2. Simultaneously with this great increase in the number of Commissioners, has been another change, equally unfavorable to the character of the institution as a board of trust. Twenty-five years ago, a rule was established by which clergymen, on the payment of fifty dollars at one time, and laymen, on the payment of one hundred dollars, become "honorary members," and as such, have a stipulated right to be present at all meetings, to participate in all debates, and, in a word, to do every thing but vote. Of these honorary members there are already some thousands, and every month increases the number. The Board of Commissioners, as it was contrived and instituted by its founders, as it was chartered by the state of Massachusetts, as it was endowed by the munificence of Norris, has well nigh lost its identity. Should the members of the corporation hold a meeting by themselves for the transaction of the business of their trust, every one of the thousands of honorary members might sue the corporation and recover the money which he paid for his membership. How entirely would the Corporation of Yale College, or that of the Andover Seminary, disqualify itself for its duties as a board of trust, and forfeit the confidence of the public, if it should place itself in a similar position.

3. As a matter of course, the character of the annual meetings has been greatly changed. Formerly, they were strictly meetings of trustees, coming together to attend to the business of their trust. According to the almost universal usage in the administration of public trusts, the traveling expenses of the Commissioners in going to the place of meeting, and returning to their homes, were a charge upon the treasury.* The business sessions of each annual meeting were distinguished from the public assemblies for popular addresses and religious services, and were held in some room adapted, in size and structure, to the transaction of business; and though spectators were not excluded from those sessions, they did not resort to them, for the reason that there were no performances there particularly designed for their enjoyment or for their edification. If there was debate, nobody spoke for display, or for pop-

*There is a reason for this usage, aside from its obvious fitness. The man who works for nothing and pays his own expenses, is not likely to do his work quite so well, be he ever so conscientious, as the man, equally conscientious, who feels that his expenses at least, are a charge upon those for whom he is working.

nearly all, be absent from the next, and that there will be no corporate identity from one meeting to another.

4. Its business must be supervision, not administration. Its relation to the executive department of the institution should be not unlike that of the corporation to the faculty in a well constituted and well conducted college. Its meetings therefore should be unfrequent, ordinarily not more than one in a year; and each annual meeting should be long enough for a deliberate and faithful review of the administration of the year, and for the expression of a careful opinion on whatever questions may legitimately come before it.

5. From these principles it follows that the members of such a board should not be appointed by a mere show of hands, or a sound of "aye," in a great promiscuous assembly where nobody knows who votes or who has a right to vote. On the contrary they should be deliberately selected, and called to participate in the trust, by those who are most likely to act wisely and disinterestedly. Above all they should not be appointed directly or indirectly by the executive officers whom it is their duty to supervise.

Let the board of managers be thus constituted; let the executive committee be their committee appointed by them and giving account to them; and a real and effective responsibility is secured. Such an arrangement is manifestly safer in respect to the great interests concerned, pecuniary and moral, ecclesiastical and religious, than any other that we can conceive. Such an arrangement, we doubt not, will be more effectual than any other in obtaining public confidence, and in retaining it through all agitations and changes. An arrangement of this kind is provided for theoretically, in all the great societies. Yet practically, in most cases, the provision amounts to little, for the reason that some or all of the obvious principles of the case are disregarded. The tendency of the trust to slide into the hands of the executive, and to rest there without any real responsibility, seems almost irresistible.

We will illustrate this by referring once more to the two great institutions which we have already named so often, and then our word will have been spoken.

The theory of the Tract Society is plain enough. There is an "Executive Committee," elected by a "Board of Directors," and therefore immediately responsible to that board. The Directors are a deliberative body with powers to "direct" the system and policy of the institution, part of them annually appointed to that trust by the members of the society, the others constituted for life by the payment of fifty dollar subscriptions. The Society itself includes all donors of not less than twenty dollars at one time.

And what is the practice? Such a thing as a deliberate election of thirty-six Directors by the members of the society, was never heard of. At the appointed stage in the celebration of the anniversary solemnities, when all other ceremonies have been duly performed, some one, generally a member of the Executive Committee, moves that certain persons whom he names, or whom without naming he designates as the officers of the last year, be elected officers for the year ensuing. The motion is immediately put to the confused assembly, and declared to be a vote. In a word, the thirty-six elective Directors are practically appointed by the Executive Committee. The anniversary celebration is then closed with the doxology and the benediction; and the meeting of the Directors, for the choice of an Executive Committee, follows on the spot. A dozen individuals, perhaps, are gathered in a

huddle around the President's chair on the platform, while the congregation is retiring; as many ballots prepared and printed beforehand at the Tract House are passed through their hands, and the business is finished. If the Board of Directors has ever held any other sort of a meeting in the twenty-one years since the Society was formed,—except in one peculiar instance which has since been pronounced entirely out of order in the judgment of some of the executive officers—the knowledge of such a meeting has never come to us. The whole story then is, the Executive Committee virtually appoint not only the Directors but themselves also, and are really responsible to nobody, while yet they control more than $150,000 annually.

We have long regarded the constitution of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, as incomparably the wisest and safest of all constitutions for a great missionary organization. In theory, it is an incorporated board of "commissioners" or trustees, acting as almoners for all who are disposed to entrust them with funds to be expended in foreign missions. As incorporated by the Legislature of Massachusetts, in 1812, the commissioners, then eleven in number, were authorized at any annual meeting to "elect by ballot any suitable persons to be members of said Board, either to supply vacancies, or in addition to their present number,"—the only limitation of their discretion being that not less than one-third of the commissioners should always be "respectable laymen," and not less than one third "respectable clergymen," the remaining third to be "characters of the same description, whether clergymen or laymen." The charter authorizes the commissioners to elect all necessary officers from among themselves; it names particularly a "Prudential Committee," and provides that the signatures of the chairman and clerk of that committee, together with the seal of the corporation, shall give validity to deeds and contracts in behalf of the Board. The system, in its original conception, is as wise and safe as it is simple. The self-perpetuating character of the corporation, which is its most obvious peculiarity, is its most obvious excellency, as an institution for an extended system of operations. And this peculiarity is most completely in accordance with Congregational institutions. This board of trust for foreign missions, is constituted precisely like the board of trust for a Congregational college, or theological seminary—a board filling its own vacancies in the exercise of its own deliberate wisdom, and regarding that as one of the highest portions of its high trust. The unparalleled degree of public confidence which the American Board obtained so early, and has held so long, is a testimony in behalf of this arrangement, which can not well be disputed. What better arrangement than this, for the supervision of the Prudential Committee, could be contrived?

Yet with all our confidence in this constitution, we see dangers arising at no very great distance. The great danger is that the secretaries and Prudential Committee, instead of being the mere executive, and as such strictly and continually responsible, will become themselves the Board, and that what ought to be the Board will become a mere appendage to the committee. Whenever such a change shall have come to pass, the institution will soon lose the strength of its hold upon the confidence of the public. We consider ourselves, therefore, as doing the very best of work for the great missionary cause, while we point out what we conceive to be the sources of this danger.

1. It seems to have been an oversight in the charter, that the Board

ular effect, or for the reporters, or otherwise than in a business fashion; and if there were differences of opinion, they could be freely uttered, and nobody was wounded. But how great has been the change within the last ten years. Now, what ought to be business sessions, are held in a church, the largest that can be had. Seats and tables, on an elevated platform, are provided not only for the officers of the institution, but for the reporters of newspapers, both religious and secular. From the galleries, bright eyes that are there not to pierce into the intricacies of business, but to glitter with emotion and to be suffused with pleasurable tears, look down upon the crowds below. The meeting is, in short, very much like an anniversary of three days' duration, and is necessarily becoming more and more so. In such an assembly, a business discussion, and particularly a free examination of what has been done by the committee, as if the committee were amenable to that assembly, is felt to be out of place; it does not edify. The exercises of the meeting are necessarily conducted with reference to popular effect, and all the forms of business, therefore, must be despatched, as forms, without debate or difference of opinion. While this is so, the meeting must of course be an exceedingly difficult thing to manage; and yet it must be managed, and, to keep it from being a total failure, all the proceedings must be planned out beforehand, by the officers, like the proceedings of any other mass-meeting. But with all the skill employed from year to year in the getting up, and with all the new excitements attendant on the progress of the work, is there not a danger that these protracted mass-meetings will soon be less attractive than they have been; and that whenever they begin to decline, the effect on the public will be discouraging, and therefore disastrous to the cause?

The reader will observe that we have imputed no sinister design, no love of power, no dislike of responsibility, to any of the highly respected men who in these, or in other like societies, are entrusted with the duty of administration. On the contrary, we have taken it for granted that they see this matter as we see it, and will rejoice heartily that the suggestions which we have made proceed from friends to whom no personal jealousy can be imputed, and whose motives can in no manner be brought into suspicion. It will also be observed that we have proposed no revolutionary changes, no new constitutions, no rash experiments. On the contrary, we have not supposed that any constitutional change will be necessary in either of the two great societies which have been taken to illustrate our remarks. Should we undertake to propose a remedy for the dangers we have pointed out, we should propose nothing violent, nothing revolutionary. Some very simple changes in each of those great establishments, putting in force rather than setting aside the constitution as it is, are all that we conceive to be necessary. Our views are simply and heartily conservative.

But we will not pursue the subject any farther at present; for the discussion which we have opened is one which is likely to be taken up in other quarters, and which we may therefore have occasion to resume hereafter. L. B.

SKETCH

OF THE LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

HON. JAMES HILLHOUSE

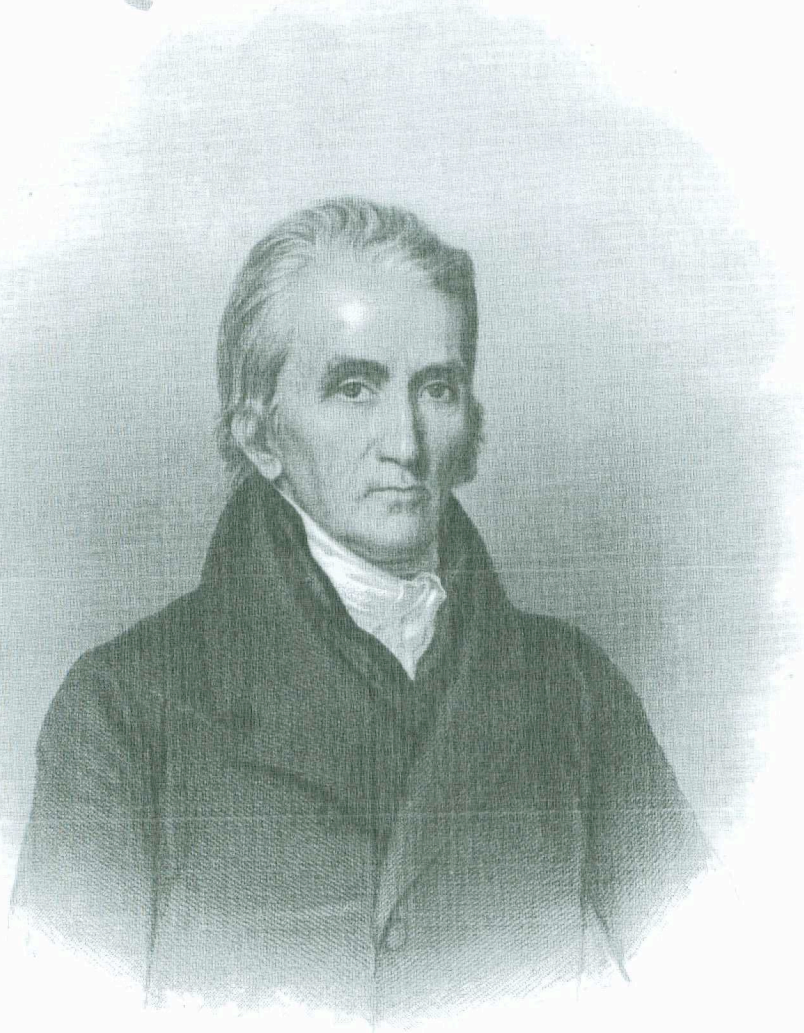
OF NEW HAVEN.

BY

REV. LEONARD BACON, D. D.

(FROM BARNARD'S AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATION.)

NEW HAVEN.
1860.



James Hillhouse

"JAMES HILLHOUSE,
THE STATESMAN, THE PATRIOT, THE CHRISTIAN,
BORN OCT. 21, 1754,
DIED DEC. 29, 1832.

HE LIVES IN THE AFFECTIONS OF HIS COUNTRYMEN,
AND HIS DEEDS ARE HIS MONUMENT."

JAMES HILLHOUSE.

JAMES HILLHOUSE, the indefatigable "nursing father," and administrator of the School Fund of Connecticut, for fifty years treasurer of Yale College, and throughout a long and eventful life a beautiful example of the public spirited citizen in a republic, was born on the 20th of October, 1754, in Montville.

The name of HILLHOUSE is that of an ancient and honorable family in the North of Ireland. More than two hundred years ago, the family seats, with estates valued at more than two thousand pounds sterling yearly, were on the shores of Lough Foyle, near Londonderry; and though the name has there become extinct, the ancient estates, particularly Artikelly and Free Hall, are still held by descendants of the family in the female line.

Early in the last century, the Rev. James Hillhouse came to New England. His father, John Hillhouse, of Free Hall, was the eldest son of Abraham Hillhouse, who resided at Artikelly.* He "had his education, and commenced Master of Arts at the famous university of Glasgow, in Scotland; and afterward read Divinity at the said college under the care of Mr. Simson, then professor of Divinity there." He was ordained by the Presbytery of Londonderry, in Ireland, and appears to have resided at or near the ancestral home till, by the death of his father in 1716, the estate descended to his elder brother Abraham. His mother died a few months later, in January, 1717. Not long after that date he came to seek a home on this side of the Atlantic. He is supposed to have come with those other Presbyterian emigrants from the North of Ireland, who, in 1719, established themselves in New Hampshire, where the towns of Derry and Londonderry, and the

* The name of Hillhouse is connected with the memorable defence of Derry against the forces of James II. James Hillhouse, a brother of John, was one of the commissioners to treat with Lord Mountjoy, and was Mayor of Londonderry in 1693. Abraham Hillhouse was among the signers of an address to King William and Queen Mary, on the occasion of the relief of the siege of Londonderry, dated 29th July, 1669.

Londonderry Presbytery, as well as many Scotch-Irish family names, are the permanent memorials of that migration. At the close of the year 1720, we find him in Boston committing to the press a "sermon" which he had composed, nearly four years before, on the occasion of his mother's death, but which does not purport to have been preached. This work (for though entitled a sermon, it is more properly a treatise in a volume of more than one hundred and forty pages,) was introduced to the reader in a preface from Increase and Cotton Mather, who speak of the author as "a valuable minister," and again as "a worthy, hopeful young minister" "lately arrived in America." He found employment in the newly instituted second parish of New London, in Connecticut, (now the town of Montville) and in 1722 was duly inducted into the office of pastor in the church there. At that place he died in 1740, aged 53.

The wife of the Rev. James Hillhouse was Mary, the daughter of Daniel Fitch, and was descended from ancestors eminent in the earliest history of Connecticut. Her paternal grandfather was the Rev. James Fitch, who came from England at the age of sixteen years, in 1638, and having received his education for the ministry under the teaching of Hooker and Stone, in the church at Hartford, was pastor of the church in Saybrook at its institution in 1646. Fourteen years afterward, he removed with the body of his people to begin the settlement of Norwich, where he served many years highly honored, not only by his own church, but in the colony at large. Her father's mother was Priscilla Mason, a daughter of Captain John Mason, the military chief of the colonists on the Connecticut, and the hero of the Pequot war in 1637, —a man distinguished by almost every trust which the young republic could bestow. That she was endowed by nature with superior mental gifts, and was a thoroughly educated woman, notwithstanding the limited advantages for female education in her day, is not a mere tradition, but is sufficiently attested by letters of hers which are still preserved among her descendants.

In the first generation of descendants from the pastor of Montville, the name of Hillhouse was borne only by his two sons, William, and James Abraham. The first was born in 1728. He lived and died on the paternal estate at Montville, greatly trusted and honored by his fellow citizens. When he was twenty-two years of age he married Sarah Griswold, who was a sister of the first Governor Griswold. At the age of twenty-seven he represented his native town of New London in the legislature of what

was then His Majesty's colony of Connecticut. He was continued in that trust by semi-annual elections, till, (in 1785) having become honorably known throughout the state, he was chosen an Assistant, or member of the Council, then commonly called "the Upper House."* Thus he served in one hundred and six semi-annual legislatures. Meanwhile he was also for many years a judge of the County Court. Nor did his civil dignities and duties excuse him from military service. He was major in the second regiment of cavalry raised by Connecticut for service in the war of the revolution. At the age of eighty, in the full possession of his powers, he declined a reëlection to the Council, and withdrew from public life. Even to that advanced age his semi-annual journey to Hartford and New Haven was performed on horseback and in a single day, wheeled carriages being too new a fashion for a man like him. He was tall, spare, swarthy, with heavy overhanging eye-brows, quaint in speech, and remarkable for a primitive simplicity of manners, combined with an impressive dignity. He died at Montville in 1816, leaving a numerous posterity. Six of his seven sons, and two of his three daughters lived to maturity, and most of them to old age.

His brother, James Abraham Hillhouse, was born in 1730, was educated at Yale College, where he graduated in 1749, and was appointed tutor one year afterwards. A colleague and intimate friend of Ezra Stiles (afterwards President Stiles) he devoted himself, with that enthusiastic scholar, to legal studies; and when, after six years of service, he relinquished his academic employment, he established himself at New Haven in the profession of law. He was soon distinguished at the bar by his forensic abilities as well as by his learning. He was eminent among his fellow citizens, and was honored by their confidence. In 1772 he was elected one of the twelve "Assistants" who with the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, were the Council or senate; for, characterized as he was by the combination of undoubted patriotism with moderation and political wisdom, he was one of those men who are most needed in a state at the crisis of an impending revolution. Three years afterwards, at the noon of life, being only forty-six years of age, he was removed by death, leaving a name

* At Governor Trumbull's retirement from the public service, William Hillhouse was chosen to fill the vacancy at the council-board which had been caused by the promotion of his brother-in-law, Matthew Griswold, to the office of Governor, and of Samuel Huntington to the office of Lieutenant Governor.

that was long retained in a most affectionate remembrance among his townsmen. "His christian life and conversation were truly exemplary, and he was adorned with the graces of meekness, charity and humility." His wife, a lady of French descent, whose grandfather fled to this country at the revocation of the edict of Nantz, was distinguished by dignity of manners, as well as by substantial worth of mind and heart. She survived him almost half a century, and died in 1822 at the age of 89.

Of these two brothers, the younger was childless. His mansion, built by himself at the head of Church street, one of the best houses in New Haven at that day, and his growing possessions, were without a lineal heir.

JAMES HILLHOUSE, the second son of William Hillhouse, of Montville, was adopted into the family of his uncle at New Haven. He was born on the 20th of October, 1754, and was removed from his father's house to his uncle's, when he was only seven years old. By this change in his domestic relations, he was placed as an only child, the pride and hope of his adopted father, in a family where intelligence, hospitality, courtesy, large intercourse with the best society, a constant example of every manly and honorable quality, and a careful religious nurture after the ancient pattern, were united in the influences by which his character was molded. In his early education he was one of the many thousand who have had the benefits of the memorable endowment which Governor Hopkins, in his testamentary remembrance of New England, had provided a century before, and which has now sustained for two hundred years the Grammar Schools of New Haven, Hartford, and Hadley. While he was a student in Yale College, (from 1769 to 1773) the Faculty consisted of the Rev. Dr. Daggett, professor of Divinity and acting President,—Nehemiah Strong, professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy,—and three tutors. It is suggestive to trace on the triennial catalogue the names of the men who successively officiated as tutors during that period of four years. For the first year the three tutors were Ebenezer Baldwin, Joseph Howe, and Samuel Wales. The next year, Joseph Lyman and Buckingham St. John occupied the places of Baldwin and Wales. A year later, when Hillhouse was a junior sophister, John Trumbull and Timothy Dwight succeeded to Lyman and St. John; and in the last year of the four, Nathan Strong came in the place of Howe. The tutor under whose immediate care and instruction Hillhouse pursued his studies for the first three years,

was Joseph Howe, afterwards pastor of the New South Church in Boston, whom he always remembered with a grateful reverence.*

One incident of his college life may be recited here in the words in which it was narrated, more than half a century afterwards, at his funeral: "It will not be improper to say—especially as the fact may produce a salutary impression on some young mind in this assembly—that he was somewhat advanced in college life before he became properly conscious of his powers or of the worth of time, or practically convinced of the importance of that close application to whatever was in hand, by which he was afterwards so distinguished. The late President Dwight, who was then in college as a tutor, though not *his* tutor, had noticed him with interest, and, with the discernment of youthful character which qualified the illustrious president to be the greatest teacher of his age, had seen in him the elements of future greatness; and he, by one well-timed, spirited, affectionate admonition and appeal, roused the man in the bosom of the unthinking stripling, and gave the country a patriot and a sage. To that incident our honored friend often referred in after life with grateful emotion, and from that hour he regarded his benefactor with veneration."

It was almost a matter of course that he was destined to the profession in which his uncle had become so eminent. He began his reading in the science of law soon after leaving college; and it was intended that, before entering on the practice of his profession, he should devote several years to those studies, and should have the benefit of the highest advantages. But on the 6th of October, 1775, only two years after the completion of his college course, the life on which that plan of study depended, was cut off. By the death of his uncle he was suddenly brought under the necessity of directing his own course and of providing for himself. Thenceforward all his success in life was dependent on his own exertions. He had still, indeed, a home in his uncle's family, which consisted of the widow and her mother and grandmother. To a family thus constituted, he was bound not only by grateful

* Rev. Joseph Howe, pastor of the New South Church in Boston, died at Hartford, Aug. 20, 1775. Pres. Stiles makes a record of this event in his Literary Diary, and adds, apparently from some publication of the day: "The righteous disposer of events was pleased to remove him from the labors of the present life, soon after he had engaged the public eye and given the world reason to expect much from his eminent abilities, his great attainments in literature, and the uncommon goodness of his heart. His church, now scattered abroad by an exertion of lawless power, are overwhelmed with sorrow." The further information is given, that after his first degree he taught a Grammar School in Hartford.

affection but by the consideration of their dependence upon him. As soon as he could be admitted to the bar, he began the practice of his chosen profession, and was successful in obtaining some part of his uncle's extensive business; but in his later years he loved to speak of his early struggles, and sometimes said that he was compelled to borrow money for the payment of his first court-fees. He inherited no part of his uncle's property till he was nearly seventy years of age. Yet in a few years, by his diligence and success in his profession, and by the judiciousness of his investments in real estate, he had become a man of wealth.

In his twenty-fourth year, on the first of January, 1779, he was united in marriage with Sarah, daughter of John Lloyd, Esq., of Stamford. But before that new year had ended, his young wife and the infant she had borne him, were laid in the grave. About three years afterwards he married Rebecca, daughter of Col. Melancthon Woolsey, of Dosoris, Long Island. Till after his second marriage, he continued to reside with the widow of his deceased uncle. Afterwards, when the growth of his own family required a separate home for them, he established his residence in close proximity to the mansion that had sheltered his childhood; and till the death of his aged relative, nothing that the tenderest filial kindness could do for her was wanting on his part. By his second marriage he had two sons and three daughters. The sons were James A. Hillhouse, the poet, and Augustus L. Hillhouse, Esq., who still survives at Paris, where he has resided for more than forty years. Mrs. Hillhouse died on the 29th of December, 1813, and was buried on the new-year's day ensuing. That day was selected for the funeral by her husband's choice because it was the thirty-fifth anniversary of his first marriage.

Much more might be said concerning his domestic life, but this memoir is designed to exhibit his public services and his character as a citizen and a benefactor of the state, rather than those details of personal experience which cannot be adequately represented in any other way than by a liberal use of materials which the sensitiveness of family affection still keeps back from the public. Perhaps the time may come when his private correspondence with his family, and with his intimate friends, will be added to the already accumulated mass of the published letters which exhibit the great men of our revolutionary period in their private friendships and personal sympathies or antipathies, and in their domestic affections and vicissitudes. For our present purpose, it may be enough to say that his was a happy home, where a large and hearty hospitality flourished after the fashion of what has now become the olden time, and where the dignity without the stiffness of antique New England courtesy was combined with a true and affectionate simplicity of manners, and with eminent intelligence and refinement.

Passing from youth to manhood just when the great struggle for independence was about to commence, James Hillhouse shared largely in the patriotic enthusiasm of the time. Before he was of age, he was hindered from joining his townsman, Benedict Arnold, in the memorable expedition of 1775, only by a positive prohibition from his uncle. The death of that relative, in the autumn of the same year, threw upon him, as we have seen, new and heavy responsibilities quite inconsistent with his military aspirations. But in those times every man had opportunity to show whatever capability he might have of military skill and prowess. When every man from eighteen years of age to forty-five was enrolled in the militia and required to do military duty, and when every militia company was constantly liable to be summoned into active service, a commission in the militia had more significance than it can have in times like these. In 1779, James Hillhouse was Captain Hillhouse of the Company of Governor's Foot Guards. Congress, after conferring with General Washington on the condition and constitution of the army, made a new arrangement, requiring each separate State to raise its own definite quota of recruits for the continental service, and offering, through the State, large bounties in lands and money to encourage enlistments. The legislature of Connecticut had determined to offer additional bounties and new guarantees against the depreciation of the currency, and had made special provision for the families of soldiers in the army. Captain Hillhouse was specially entrusted by Governor Trumbull with the duty of promoting enlistments in one of the brigades. A stirring appeal from him, inviting enlistments, and calling on "all friends to American freedom" for their patriotic coöperation in promoting the object, was published in the New Haven newspaper of June 23d, 1779.*

* We transcribe the address at length from the Connecticut Journal of the above named date.

ALL FRIENDS TO AMERICAN FREEDOM.

The period is now come, when (in all probability) we may, with proper exertions, put a speedy termination to the war. And nothing is more necessary to bring about so desirable an event, than furnishing a competent number of men for the field. The encouragement for soldiers to enlist is truly great, and the offers

A few days afterwards, on Monday, July 5th, the Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence was to be celebrated for the first time in New Haven. Captain Hillhouse was among the most active in making the arrangements and preparations for that occasion. Sunday evening—for the New England sabbath was then measured from sunset to sunset—there was a public assembly of citizens in the meeting-house of the First Church, (the old "Middle Brick") and the programme of the intended celebration was completed. Some of the more zealous and active were occupied till a late

generous. The time of service will most likely be short; they are to suffer nothing by the depreciation of currency; their families are to be supplied with the substantials of life at the *old price*; the army are well clothed, and provided with everything necessary and convenient; and at the end of the war they are to receive a handsome reward for their services. I am sensible our internal foes, our worst enemies, will throw every discouragement in the way,—will tell you that our money is almost run out, and that we must inevitably submit. But you may be assured that no exertions will be wanting on the part of the United States to disappoint their expectations. And I am confident that should it ever be our misfortune to experience such a calamity, the *free-born sons of America* would arm themselves and go forth, without hire or reward, against our enemies, and never lay down their arms till they had driven every invader from our land. Never have the Americans been animated with a becoming spirit, but they have been successful. No sooner were our Southern Brethren roused to proper exertions, than they defeated the troops, sent upon an expedition, from the success of which our enemies have made such pompous boasts, and have driven them off loaded with infamy and disgrace.

His Excellency, the Governor, has directed me to enlist all within this brigade who shall be so nobly and virtuously inclined. It being a matter of public concern, I beg every individual will use his influence to encourage a competent number to enlist, as it will save the disagreeable necessity of a draught: And voluntary enlistment is certainly much the most eligible, as it will convince our enemies we have not yet lost our spirits, and will fill our brethren, already in the field, with new life and courage to find us ready with cheerfulness to lend them our aid.

Lest there should be any who cannot engage upon the above terms, for fear the war may chance to continue longer than they think they can possibly absent themselves from their families and farms, I am authorized by his Excellency to offer those who will engage to serve in said army until the fifteenth day of January next, twenty pounds bounty, a new regimental coat, and the same pay, refreshment, and family support, during the term of their services respectively as other soldiers in the Continental army, with liberty to choose the company in which they will be joined. And who is there that will deprive himself of the pleasure and satisfaction he would derive through his whole life, from reflecting upon his having served a campaign in so important a period of the war. I hereby invite all, and shall make the offer to as many as possible, to engage before the 10th day of July next, when I am to make return to his Excellency. Those who incline to accept, will, by making application, receive their bounty in bills, and be kindly treated by their most obedient and humble servant,

JAMES HILLHOUSE.

New Haven, June 21, 1779.

hour in making preparations. They could not have had much time for sleep, when at two o'clock in the morning of that day a British fleet, which had sailed from New York on Saturday, anchored off West-Haven. Alarm guns were fired, and the militia were called to arms. A portion of the inhabitants made haste to remove their families, and whatever of their household goods was most valuable. Others were slow to believe that any great danger was impending, and flattered themselves with the hope that the fleet would sail in the morning. But not long after sunrise, those who were watching with a telescope on the tower of the college chapel, (the building now known as the Athenæum) saw distinctly boats putting off from the shipping for the shore, and there was no longer room for the most incredulous or the most hopeful to doubt what were the intentions of the enemy. Of the adult male population, a large portion armed themselves and went forth to meet the invaders. Another portion left the town with those of the women and children who were removed to places of safety. Others, to the number of ninety or a hundred, remained at home, "partly tories, partly timid whigs," as President Stiles describes them. The land force designed for the destruction of New Haven was two thousand six hundred men, as officially reported. One division, under the command of Gen. Garth, was landed, and as soon as that operation was completed the fleet sailed to the other side of the harbor, where the landing of the other division, under the immediate command of Gen. Tryon, was speedily effected. The inhabitants of East Haven and the adjoining towns found occupation for Gen. Tryon and his troops, while the available force of New Haven, amounting to not more than two hundred men, with two field pieces, went out to encounter Gen. Garth. Hezekiah Sabin, who was a lieutenant colonel in the militia, seems to have been the recognized commander of the little force extemporaneously raised. The two pieces of artillery were stationed at West Bridge, where some slight defences were hastily raised in a position to command not only the bridge but the long causeway by which it is approached from the west. "Captain Hillhouse," says President Stiles, "with twenty or thirty brave young men, together with many others, crossed the bridge over to Milford Hill, and within a hundred yards or a quarter of a mile of the [West Haven] meeting house, where the enemy were paraded. Upon their beginning the march, Captain Hillhouse fired upon the advanced guard so as to drive them in upon the main body. But coming in force, the enemy proceeded. Others be-

sides Hillhouse's party had by this time passed the bridge and reached the hill, to perhaps one hundred and fifty men. These kept up a galling fire on especially their outguards extending perhaps forty or fifty rods on each side the column.* Our artillery at the bridge was well managed by Captain [Phineas] Bradley, threw shot successfully across to Milford Hill, and prevented the enemy from passing the causeway and so into town that way." Thus baffled at that point the enemy continued their march northward to what is now the Westville Bridge, annoyed and harassed on their march by a party of the New Haven men on their left under the leadership of Aaron Burr, who happened to be with some of his relatives in New Haven at that time, and who after carrying a young daughter of his uncle, Pierpont Edwards,† to a place of safety in North Haven, had returned in time to partake in the fight. Meanwhile Captain Hillhouse and the remainder of the little force on Milford Hill returned over West Bridge, and with Col. Sabin and the two field pieces went across the fields to meet the enemy at the Westville Bridge. There the enemy effected

*It was "at the second mile-stone," just where the road to West Haven diverges from the Milford road, that the Rev. Dr. Daggett, Professor of Divinity in Yale College, (and the acting President for nine years before the accession of Dr. Stiles) encountered the enemy. He had come from the town "riding furiously on his old black mare, with his long fowling piece in his hand." At the bridge he had addressed a few "patriotic and earnest words" to the little company that was to serve the artillery. Rushing by the company of young men under Capt. Hillhouse, several of them students, he was greeted with cheers. As they turned southward toward West Haven, they saw him ascending a little to the west, and taking his station deliberately in a little copse of woods. When the young men, having driven back the advanced guard and encountered the main body of the enemy, were making their hasty retreat to regain the other side of the river, the professor, who never had learned to "advance backward," kept his station with characteristic fearlessness and tenacity, waiting for the enemy. As the British column came up, several successive shots from the hill side arrested their attention, and the sturdy form of the professor in his clerical costume was easily discovered by the party sent to the spot whence the firing proceeded. "What are you doing there, you old fool, firing on His Majesty's troops?" was the exclamation of the officer. "*Exercising the rights of war,*" replied the professor. The oddity of such an answer, proceeding from such a person, probably arrested the shot or the bayonet that might have killed him on the instant; and the question was put whether, if his life was spared, he would be likely ever to do such a thing again. "*Nothing more likely,*" said he, "*I rather think I should.*" He was permitted to surrender himself; but was cruelly pierced with bayonets, and driven at the head of their column till they reached the town. For a month afterwards his life was in danger from the wounds and injuries which he had received, and indeed, his death, which took place in the following year, was hastened by those sufferings. See the article on Prof. Daggett in Dr. Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit, Vol. I.

† The late Mrs. Johnson, of Stratford.

their passage, partly over the bridge and partly by fording the river. But as they came up the hill from the river, and took the road towards the town, the force commanded by Col. Sabin and Captain Hillhouse, "gave them a heavy fire and took a number of prisoners." By this time, too, they began to be annoyed by parties of militia from Derby and other towns. The New Haven men kept up their firing as they retreated toward their homes. Just at the entrance of the town as it then was, near where the junction of Dixwell street and Whalley avenue now is, there was something like a battle for a little while, and a number were killed on both sides. The enemy entered the town at a little before one o'clock p. m., greatly exhausted with the extreme heat of the day as well as with their long march and the annoyances they had met by the way.

This bold defense of New Haven against a force so greatly superior, answered its main purpose. It gave time not only for the escape of a large portion of the alarmed defenseless population, but also for the removal and concealment of much property that would otherwise have been destroyed or carried off by the enemy; and it saved the town from the fate which immediately afterwards fell upon Fairfield and Norwalk. "From the first entrance till eight in the evening, the town was given up to ravage and plunder, from which only a few houses were protected." Mrs. Hillhouse, the widow of James Abraham Hillhouse, was a member of the Church of England, and her political sympathies were with the British. Hers, therefore, was one of the few houses to be protected from pillage. Some of the British officers were quartered there, and were received with the courtesy due to men who bore His Majesty's commission. Yet the loyal lady was in great danger from the imputation of her nephew's patriotism. It happened that the newspaper containing Captain Hillhouse's patriotic call for recruits came under the notice of the officers almost as soon as they entered the house which was to be protected for its loyalty. The house and its contents would have been immediately given up to the plundering soldiers, had not the lady, with a dignified frankness which repelled suspicion, informed her guests that though the young man whose name was subscribed to that call was a near and valued relative of hers, and was actually resident under that roof, the property was entirely her own; and that the part which he had taken in the conflict with Great Britain, was taken not only on his own responsibility, but in opposition to her judgment and her sympathies.

Gen. Tryon's official report shows that the conflagration of the town was intended, and that the purpose was relinquished because it became necessary to hasten the re-embarkation of the troops. The intended junction of the division which landed on the East Haven side with that which landed at West Haven, could not be effected. Squads and companies of militia from the neighboring towns were beginning to gather on every side like angry clouds portending a tempest. The invaders found themselves in a dangerous position; and at the earliest morning hour they called in their guards, and were glad to find that they were permitted to embark without molestation. The result of their expedition was that they had killed twenty-seven Americans, (including those who were slain in their own houses) and had wounded nineteen, while they themselves had lost about eighty in killed and wounded; that they had carried away some tories who dared not stay behind, and a few prisoners (including some whose only offense was that they were respected and trusted by their fellow-citizens); that they had destroyed about seventy thousand dollars worth of private property; and that they had effectually extirpated whatever sentiment of loyalty toward the British crown had lingered till then among the more conservative sort of people.

In May, 1780, the roll of the House of Representatives in the State legislature shows the name of "Captain James Hillhouse" as the second representative from the town of New Haven. The next year he was first representative; and thenceforward he was frequently reëlected by his townsmen to this trust, till the people of the whole State in 1789 called him to a seat in the Council. In 1786, and again in 1787, he was elected by the people at large a delegate to the Congress of the old confederation; but he did not serve in that capacity. It is believed that no other instance can be found in which so young a man has been so trusted and honored by the people of Connecticut.

In 1782, he was elected Treasurer of Yale College, and he held that office through all the remainder of his life, just fifty years. Nor did it become to him a merely honorary office, when other public trusts and duties required him to be absent from New Haven for a large part of every year. An Assistant Treasurer was employed by the corporation to relieve him of the executive details of the business; but he himself, through all that long term of service, superintended the finances of the institution, and was ever active and watchful to promote its interests. He loved it not only because of his personal relation to it as an alumnus, but also be-

cause, in his estimation, its continued efficiency and the enlargement of its means of usefulness were essential to the welfare and the political and social advancement of his native Connecticut. Few names in the history of Yale College are more worthy than his to be had in perpetual and grateful remembrance.

In October, 1790, Mr. Hillhouse was elected one of the five representatives from Connecticut in the second Congress of the United States. His colleagues in the representation were Jonathan Sturges, Jonathan Trumbull, Jeremiah Wadsworth, and Amasa Learned. The published debates (see Benton's Abridgement) give ample evidence of his activity and influence as a member of the House of Representatives. Many important questions in relation to the working of the government under the Federal Constitution were to be considered and decided; for though the first Congress, in its three laborious sessions, had organized the judiciary and the various departments of executive administration, had provided a revenue for the Federal treasury, had re-established the public credit, had enacted a rule of naturalization, had made the necessary regulations for the sale and settlement of the public lands, and by the wisdom of their measures had secured for the new government the widest confidence in its stability and efficiency, there remained other great questions incidental to the newness of the constitution. We find Mr. Hillhouse taking part in almost every great debate; and his speeches show not only his ability as a debater, but his blunt and fearless honesty, his unfailing good humor, and his sagacious and large-minded patriotism. His first speech, as given in the Abridged Debates, was on the ratio of representation. Next he takes part in the discussion on a provision for declaring what officer shall act as President in case of a vacancy in the office both of President and Vice President. In the second session of that Congress, we find him speaking, first against a proposed reduction of the army at a time when the United States were at war with powerful tribes of Indians, and, next, in the great and protracted debate on the official conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton. In the third Congress, the representation of Connecticut being increased by the new apportionment, his colleagues were Learned, Trumbull and Wadsworth, of the former delegation, together with Joshua Coit, Zephaniah Swift, and Uriah Tracy. In the fourth Congress he had three new colleagues in the places of Learned, Trumbull and Wadsworth, namely, Chauncey Goodrich, Roger Griswold, and Nathaniel Smith. The first session of that Congress was signalized by two

memorable debates on questions arising out of the treaty with Great Britain, known as Jay's Treaty;—first, on a motion to request of the President (Washington) a copy of the instructions given to the minister by whom the treaty was negotiated, and of all the correspondence and documents in relation to it; and afterwards on the expediency of legislation to carry the treaty into effect. In both those debates, and especially in the second, Mr. Hillhouse had a conspicuous part.

At the opening of the next session, which began at Philadelphia, Dec. 5, 1796, he entered the Senate, having been chosen to complete the unexpired term of Oliver Ellsworth, who had resigned his seat in the Senate for the seat of Chief Justice in the Supreme Court of the United States. At the inauguration of President John Adams, March 4, 1797, he presented the credentials of his re-election for the full term of six years then commencing. When Mr. Jefferson, after being elected President, withdrew from the presidency of the Senate, Mr. Hillhouse was made President *pro tempore* of that body. He was duly re-elected for another term commencing in March, 1803, and for yet another commencing with the first inauguration of President Madison, in 1809. He and his colleague, Uriah Tracy, who entered the Senate with him, as successor of Jonathan Trumbull for an unexpired term, are the only senators four times elected to that place by the State of Connecticut. Hillhouse and Tracy were colleagues in the Senate till the death of the latter in 1807, just at the commencement of his fourth term of service. In the party divisions of that period, Mr. Hillhouse ranked with the Federalists. He had supported the administration of Washington and the elder Adams, and he was in the opposition under the administration of Jefferson. Yet his speeches show that he was by no means a mere partizan, and that on great questions of statesmanship, he ordinarily rose to views above the range of party interests. Thus in the debate of November, 1803, on that amendment to the Constitution by which the present mode of electing President and Vice President was introduced, we find him saying—

> Though it is impossible to prevent party altogether, much more when population and luxury increase, and corruption and vice with them, it is prudent to preserve as many checks against it as are practicable. I have been long in Congress, and have seen the conflicting interests of large and small States operate. The time may not be remote when party will adopt new designations. Federal and Republican parties have had their day; their designations will not last long, and the ground of difference between parties will not be the same that it has been; new names and new views will be taken; it has been the course in all nations. * * * A fanciful difference in politics is the bugbear of party now, because no other, no real cause of difference has subsisted.

Federalist as he was, his theory of the Federal government, even while the party with which he acted was ascendant in the Union, abhorred the idea of centralized and consolidated power. He regarded the State governments as the great conservative force in our political system, the guardians of liberty against power, the depositaries of all the most important public trusts, and the ultimate security, under God, for the efficiency and permanence of republican principles. He opposed whatever tended to magnify with factitious honors and means of influence the functionaries of the Federal power. The Presidency of the United States, with its great and ever growing accumulation of power, and with the excitements and perils of the quadrennial election, was to his view the point of peril in our system. He sometimes said among his friends, that the Presidency was made for Washington; that the Convention in defining the powers of that office, and the States, in accepting the constitution as it was, had Washington only in their thoughts; and that the powers of that office were too great to be committed to any other man. Such considerations, long cherished, led him to propose, in April, 1808, certain amendments to the constitution, aiming at a radical reformation of what he considered as the dangerous tendencies in the system of our Federal government. That proposal has been so often associated with his name by those who know little of what it was, or of what he was, that the readers of this memoir will reasonably expect to find here his own statement and explanation of his views. The lapse of more than half a century since his speech in the Senate explaining his proposed amendments, has added as much to the strength of the Union as it has added to our territorial dimensions and to our imperial wealth and greatness; but it has not invigorated the sentiment of State sovereignty; nor has it diminished the power of the President or the excitements that attend a Presidential election. Those who have already forgotten what threats were gravely made by the gravest sort of men while the last election was in progress, and what schemes were projected by fiery and dangerous men to dissolve the Union by violence in the event of the success of the candidate whom they opposed—those who do not know that the business of making Presidents has become the absorbing and all-subordinating business of our national politics; nor that the salaries, jobs, and perquisites, directly or indirectly at the disposal of the President, are claimed and acknowledged as due to the party workers who have helped him to his place of power—may

smile at the fear which so old-fashioned a patriot as James Hillhouse could not but feel for the future of his country.*

* The resolution in which Mr. Hillhouse presented his proposed amendments to the Senate, was as follows:

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, (two-thirds of both Houses concurring,) That the following articles be proposed to the Legislatures of the several States, as amendments to the Constitution of the United States; all or any of which articles, when ratified by three-fourths of the said Legislatures, to be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the said Constitution, viz:

ARTICLES in addition to, and amendment of, the CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, proposed by Congress, and ratified by the Legislatures of the several States, pursuant to the fifth article of the original Constitution.

I. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every year by the people of the several States: their electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State Legislature; and their term of service shall expire on the first Tuesday of April in each year.

II. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the Senators of the United States shall be chosen for three years, and their term of service shall expire on the first Tuesday of April.

Immediately after they shall be assembled, in consequence of the first election, they shall be divided as equally as may be, into three classes. The seats of the first class shall be vacated at the expiration of the first year; of the second class at the expiration of the second year; and of the third class, at the expiration of the third year: so that one third may be chosen every year. Vacancies to be filled as already provided.

III. On the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the President of the United States shall be appointed, and shall hold his office until the expiration of the first Tuesday of April, one thousand eight hundred and fourteen. And on the first Tuesday of April, one thousand eight hundred and fourteen, and on the first Tuesday of April, in each succeeding year, the President shall be appointed, to hold his office during the term of one year. The mode of appointment shall be as follows:

In presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, each Senator belonging to the class whose term of service will first expire, and constitutionally eligible to the office of President, of which the House of Representatives shall be the sole judges, and shall decide without debate, shall, beginning with the first on the alphabet, and in their alphabetical order, draw a ball out of a box containing the same number of uniform balls as there shall be Senators present and eligible, one of which balls shall be colored, the others white. The Senator who shall draw the colored ball shall be President. A Committee of the House of Representatives, to consist of a member from each State, to be appointed in such manner as the House shall direct, shall place the balls in the box, shall shake the same so as to intermix them, and shall superintend the drawing thereof. In case of the removal of the President from office, or of his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties thereof, if Congress be then in session, or if not, as soon as they shall be in session, the President shall, in the manner before mentioned, be appointed for the residue of the term. And until the disability be removed, or a President be appointed, the Speaker of the Senate shall act as President. And Congress may, by law, provide for the case of removal by death, resignation, or inability of the President, and vacancy in the office, or inability of the Speaker of the Senate; and such officer shall act accordingly until the disability of the President be removed, or another be appointed.

The seat of a Senator who shall be appointed as President, shall thereby be vacated.

IV. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the compensation of the President shall not exceed fifteen thousand dollars a year.

V. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the office of Vice-President shall cease. And the Senate, on the same day in each year, when the President shall be annually appointed, shall choose a Speaker; and in the absence of the Speaker, or when he shall exercise the office of President, the Senate shall choose a Speaker pro tempore.

VI. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the President shall nominate, and by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers, and Consuls, Judges of the Supreme Court, and all other officers of the United States whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by law. But Congress may, by law, vest the appointment of such officers as they think proper, in the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate; and of the inferior officers in the President alone, in the courts of law, or in the heads of departments. But no law vesting the power of appointment shall be for a longer term than two years. All proceedings on nominations shall be with closed doors, and without debate; but information of the character and qualifications of the person nominated shall be received.

VII. After the third day of March, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, the President shall have power to fill all vacancies that may happen during the recess of Congress, by granting commissions, which shall expire at the end of their next session. No removal from office shall take place without the consent of the Senate and House of Representatives. But Congress may, by law, authorize the removal, by the same power as may, by law, be authorized to make the appointment. But in every case of misconduct in office, where the consent of the Senate, or of the Senate and House of Representatives, shall be necessary to a removal, the President, during the recess of Congress, may suspend the officer, and make a temporary appointment of a person to exercise the office, until the next meeting of Congress, and until a decision can be had by the Senate, or by the Senate and House of Representatives, as the case may be, on a question for the removal of the officer suspended. All proceedings respecting removal from office shall be had without debate, upon the information and reasons which shall be communicated by the President, and with closed doors.

The entire speech in which Mr. Hillhouse explained to the Senate his proposals for amendments to the constitution, is too long to be transcribed in this place. A condensed abstract, with a few selected passages, may serve to exhibit the mind and spirit of the man. Having referred, in his exordium, to the circumstances in which the constitution was formed and adopted, he said:

Before I proceed with my explanatory remarks, I must take the liberty of stating that in using the terms 'monarchy,' 'aristocracy,' and 'democracy,' I do not use them as the cant words of party; I use them in their fair genuine sense. The terms 'Federalist' and 'Republican,' I do not use by way of commendation or reproach, but merely by way of description, as the first names of individuals to distinguish them from others of the same family name.

Federalists and Republicans never divided upon the elementary principles of government. There are very few Americans who are not in principle attached to a free republican government; though they may differ on minor points, and about the best mode of organizing it. Persons attached to monarchy or aristocracy are few indeed, they are but as the dust in the balance. No one in his sober senses can believe it practicable, or politic if practicable to use either. If ever introduced, which God forbid, it must be done at the point of the bayonet.

He referred to the origin of parties under the constitution, and to the names of the parties then existing, and said—"The supposed differences are more imaginary than real. Names may, and sometimes do, deceive ignorant, uninformed individuals, but these names now scarcely do that."

Some of the important features of our constitution were borrowed from a model which did not very well suit our condition. I mean the constitution and government of England, a mixed monarchy, in which monarchy, aristocracy and democracy are so combined as to form a check on each other. One important and indispensable requisite of such a government is, that the two first branches should be hereditary, and that the monarch should be the fountain of honor and source of power. In the United States, the people are the source of *all* power.

Placing in the hands of the Chief Magistrate, who depends on a popular election, prerogatives and powers in many respects equal to—in some, exceeding in practice those exercised by the King of Great Britain, is one of the errors of the constitution. This error can be corrected only in one of two ways; either the office must be stripped of those high prerogatives and powers, and the term of holding the office shortened, or some other mode devised than a popular election, for appointing a President; otherwise our country must perpetually groan under the scourge of party rage and violence; and be continually exposed to that worst of all calamities, civil war.

He was well aware that he had engaged in a difficult undertaking, but after speaking briefly of the prejudices and interests which were in his way, and courteously claiming for his proposals a deliberate and candid hearing, he proceeded:

A prominent feature of the amendments is, to shorten the term of service of the President, Senators, and Representatives. Observation and experience having convinced me that in an elective government, long terms of office and high compensations do not tend to make independent public servants, while they produce an anxious solicitude in the incumbents to keep their places, and render seekers of office more eager to obtain them, and more regardless of the means.

My first amendment goes to reduce the term of service of the members of the House of Representatives to one year.

No inconvenience can arise from this arrangement, because there is a constitutional provision that Congress shall assemble once in every year. That body, composed of the immediate representatives of the people, ought to exhibit a fair representation of their sentiments and will; and coming fresh from the people to the Congress of each year, will, it may be presumed, fairly express such sentiments and will. And if, in an interval from one session of Congress to another, there be a real change of public sentiment, why should not that change be expressed? Will an attempt in their representatives to resist it tend to tranquillize the public mind? or will it not, like persecution in religion, tend to make proselytes to their sentiments?

Constitutions, except so far as they are necessary to organize the several departments of government, and bring the public functionaries into a situation to deliberate and act—and in the General government to draw the line

of demarcation between that and the State governments, to prevent interference and collision,—are of little avail, and present but feeble barriers against the public will. Whenever a measure is understood and believed to be necessary to promote the general welfare, the people will not fail to effect it. If they cannot, by construction, get round the constitution, they will by an amendment, go directly to their object. The danger is that by attempting to extend constitutional restrictions too far, unnatural and mischievous exertions of power may be produced.

The application of this last remark to the point immediately under discussion is, that if the Federal Constitution undertakes to check the power of the States (that is of the people in the States) over their own united government, by making the election of representatives infrequent, it gives occasion and temptation to "unnatural and mischievous exertions of power." If the people are not allowed to express their will in the frequent election of those who are to be the organs of that will, they will naturally resort to other and irregular methods. But without making this application, he proceeded:

By the second amendment, the term of service of the senators is to be reduced to three years; one-third to be chosen each year. * * * *

Senators represent the rights and interests of States in respect to their sovereignty. In them, therefore, the States ought to feel a *confidence*. And this confidence will rather be increased than lessened by shortening the term of service to three years. Shall I be told that the legislatures of the States are not to be relied on for their *stability* and *patriotism?* that it would be unsafe, every third year to trust them with the appointment of their senators? No, surely. The several States are the *pillars* on which the Constitution of the United States *rests*, and *must rest*. If these pillars are not sound —if they are composed of feeble, frail materials, then must the General government moulder into *ruin*. This, however, is not my belief. I have confidence in the State governments. I am for keeping them in their *full vigor and strength*. For if any disaster befalls the General government, the States, having within their respective spheres all the power of independent governments, will be the arks of safety to which the citizens can flee for protection from anarchy and the horrid evils which follow in its train. I have therefore uniformly been opposed to measures which had the remotest tendency to their consolidation. * * *

The third amendment provides for the appointment of a President. He is to be taken by lot from the Senate, and is to hold his office for one year.

Of course, he could not but acknowledge that this mode of selection was liable to obvious objections. He would not have proposed it "if any other could have been devised which would not convulse the whole body politic, set wide open the door to intrigue and cabal, and bring upon the nation incalculable evils, evils already felt and growing much more serious." The two objections which he undertook to answer were, first, that this mode of selection "is a departure from the *elective principle*," and, secondly, "that it will not always ensure the best talents." The answer to both these objections is involved in the progress of his argument.

When senators shall be chosen with an eye to this provision, every State will be anxious to make such a selection of persons as will not disgrace it in the eventual elevation of one of them to the Presidential chair. Every State

legislature would, in the choice of the senator, consider itself as nominating a candidate for the Presidency. The effect of this arrangement would be, in reality, that instead of the States appointing Electors to choose a President, the legislatures themselves would become the Electors, with this advantage, that the nomination would be made when not under the influence of a Presidential electioneering fever. In the regular course of appointing senators, only one nomination would be made at one time in each State; and, in most cases, three years would elapse before he could be designated for the Presidency. The great caution in the selection of senators, with a reference to that high office, would produce another excellent effect: it would ensure the continuance in that body of men of the most respectable talents and education—an object of the highest importance to the general welfare.

The two objections are disposed of; the first by showing that, under the existing constitution, whenever the House of Representatives, voting by States, selects a President from among three of the candidates from the Electoral colleges, the departure from the elective principle is hardly less than if a President were to be designated by lot from among a larger yet carefully selected number of candidates;—and the second, by showing that if every senator were to be selected with reference to the contingency of his serving in the chief executive office of the government, men of inferior ability would naturally be excluded from the Senate; that under the present system there is the same possibility of having a President neither distinguished for talents nor for integrity, and the further danger of having one of that sort, who, instead of going out of office at the end of a year, will be President for four years; and that the eminent talents and experience of subordinate functionaries, such as the heads of departments, will be no less available, and no more necessary to a President thus appointed for one year than they now are to a President appointed in conformity with the constitution as it is.

Having disposed of the objections to his plan, the Senator proceeded to exhibit in a more positive way some of the dangers inseparable from that part of the Constitution which he was proposing to amend. Whether those dangers are real, and whether they are on the whole less threatening now than they were fifty years ago, are questions on which, perhaps, there is room for a difference of opinion among thoughtful and patriotic minds.

The office of President is the only one in our government clothed with such powers as might endanger liberty, and I am not without apprehension that, at some future period, they may be exerted to overthrow the liberties of our country. The change from four to ten years is small; the next step would be from ten years to life, and then to the nomination of a successor, from which the transition to an hereditary monarchy would almost follow of course. The exigencies of the country, the public safety, and the means of defense against foreign invasion, may place in the hands of an ambitious, daring President, an army of which he would be the legitimate commander, and with which he might enforce his claim. This may not happen in my day; it probably will not; but I have children whom I love, and whom I expect to leave behind me to share in the destinies of our common country. I cannot therefore feel indifferent to what may befall them, and generations yet unborn.

After showing in a few words that his proposed amendments in regard to the Presidential office would "render it impossible to bring the high prerogatives of this office to aid in procuring it," he went on to say—

Of the impropriety and impolicy of the present mode of electing a President, can there be stronger proof, can there be more convincing evidence, than is now exhibiting in the United States? In whatever direction we turn our eyes, we behold the people arranging themselves for the purpose of commencing the electioneering campaign for the next President and Vice President. All the passions and feelings of the human heart are brought into the most active operation. The electioneering spirit finds its way to every fireside; pervades our domestic circles, and threatens to destroy the enjoyment of social harmony. The seeds of discord will be sown in families, among friends, and throughout the whole community. In saying this, I do not mean anything to the disadvantage of either of the candidates. They may have no agency in the business. They may be the involuntary objects of such competition, without the power of directing or controling the storm. The fault is in the mode of election, in setting the people to choose a King. In fact, a popular election, and the exercise of such powers and prerogatives as are by the Constitution vested in the President, are incompatible. The evil is increasing and will increase, until it shall terminate in civil war and despotism. The people, suffering under the scourge of party feuds and factions, and finding no refuge under the State, any more than in the General government, from party persecution and oppression, may become impatient, and submit to the first tyrant who can protect them against the thousand tyrants.

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Reducing the Presidential term of service to one year, will remove the necessity of attaching to the office the splendor of a palace. The simplicity of ancient republics would better suit the nature of our government. The instances of persons called from the plough to command armies, or to preside over the public councils, show that in a republic pomp and splendor are not necessary to real dignity. Cincinnatus, who was content with the scanty support derived from tilling, with his own hands, his four-acre farm, has been as celebrated in history as the most splendid monarchs. By these remarks I would not be understood to object against giving adequate salaries to all public functionaries. In the case of subordinate officers, it may be left to legislative discretion. But the President, having such great power and extensive influence, his compensation ought to have a constitutional limit, and not exceed fifteen thousand dollars.

It is chiefly for the sake of illustrating the character of the man that these extended quotations have been given. A naked statement of his proposal, unaccompanied by any of his own explanations, might make upon some minds a very false impression. He was not a visionary statesman, like those who in their closets frame ingenious schemes of government for utopian commonwealths. Nor was he one of those who have a passion for pulling down the fabric of existing institutions for the sake of some new-fangled reconstruction. His genius was conservative rather than revolutionary, and practical rather than speculative. The reasons and explanations which he offered in his speech, and which have been

spread before the readers of this memoir, show the conservative and practical character of his mind. He had observed with deep insight, and with far reaching foresight, the working of those constitutional arrangements which he proposed to amend. He saw in the ever widening vortex of Presidential power and patronage, and in the ever returning agitation of Presidential elections, a force that threatened to engulf the independent self-government of the States within their separate sovereignties; and he desired such a modification of the system as should effectually remove that danger.

More than twenty years afterwards, when he had retired from all his public employments, he opened a correspondence with some of the most eminent survivors of his own generation, asking their views of his proposed remedy for what had so long seemed to him the chief infirmity of the Federal Constitution. Large portions of the replies which he received from President Madison, Chief Justice Marshall, Chancellor Kent, and Mr. Crawford, who had been contemporary with him in the Senate, and afterwards Secretary of the Treasury under President Monroe, were communicated to the New York Historical Society in 1848, by James H. Raymond, Esq., and were published in the proceedings of the Society for that year. Mr. Madison, as might be anticipated from the part which he had taken in the formation of the Constitution, and from his long familiarity with the exercise of executive power in the highest offices of government, felt strongly and represented with much clearness and force the obvious objections to the bold and sweeping change proposed by Mr. Hillhouse. Chief Justice Marshall acknowledged that in 1830 (the date of the correspondence,) 'his views of this subject had changed a good deal since 1808.' He 'considered it, however, rather as an affair of curious speculation than of probable fact.' "Your plan," said he, "comes in conflict with so many opposing interests and deep-rooted prejudices, that I would despair of its success, were its ability still more apparent than it is." After intimating that "we must proceed with our present system till its evils become still more obvious," he proceeded as follows:

My own private mind has been slowly and reluctantly advancing to the belief that the present mode of choosing the chief magistrate threatens the most serious danger to the public happiness. The passions of men are inflamed to so fearful an extent, large masses are so embittered against each other, that I dread the consequences. The election agitates every section of the United States, and the ferment is never to subside. Scarcely is a President elected, before the machinations respecting a successor commence. Every political question is affected by it. All those who are in office, all those who want office, are put in motion. The angriest, I might say the worst passions are roused and put into full activity. Vast masses, united closely, move in opposite directions, animated with the most hostile feelings towards each other. What is to be the effect of all this? Age is, perhaps, unreasonably timid. Certain it is, that I now dread consequences which I once thought imaginary. I feel disposed to take refuge under some less turbulent and less dangerous mode of choosing the chief magistrate, and my mind suggests none less objectionable than that you have proposed. We shall no longer be enlisted under the banners of particular men. Strife will no longer be excited, when it can no longer affect its object. Neither the people at large, nor the councils of the nation, will be agitated by the all-disturbing question,—Who shall be President? Yet he will, in truth, be chosen substantially by the people. The Senators must always be among the most able men of the States. Though not appointed for the particular purpose, they must always be appointed for important purposes, and must possess a large share of the public confidence. If the people of the United States were to elect as many persons as compose one senatorial class, and the President was to be chosen among them by lot, in the manner you propose, he would be substantially elected by the people; and yet such a mode of election would be recommended by no advantages which your plan does not possess. In many respects it would be less eligible.

Reasoning *a priori*, I should undoubtedly pronounce the system adopted by the Convention, the best that could be devised. Judging from experience, I am driven to a different conclusion.

Chancellor Kent wrote in the same vein of thought. He said of "the popular election of the President," (which, by the way, was not intended by the framers of the Constitution*) "it is that part of the machine of our government that I am afraid is doomed to destroy us." "Our plan of election of a President, I apprehend, has failed of its purpose, as it was presumed and foretold that it would fail by some of the profoundest statesmen of 1787. We cannot but perceive that this very presidential question has already disturbed and corrupted the administration of the government, and cherishes intrigue, duplicity, abuse of power, and corrupt and arbitrary measures." "Your reflections are sage, patriotic, and denote a deep and just knowledge of government and man."

Mr. Crawford's letter records the fact that he seconded in the Senate Mr. Hillhouse's resolution proposing his amendments of the Constitution, though at that time he had not made up his mind definitely upon the principle of the amendments. But subsequent "reflection and experience" had convinced him. He went on to say—

* Did the framers of the Constitution expect that, in less than half a century, the colleges of Electors, assembling in their several States ostensibly for the performance of a duty requiring the highest wisdom and the most enlarged patriotism, would have no other function than simply to register the decrees of party conventions—a function to which any man with intelligence enough to write his name, and honesty enough to keep out of the penitentiary, would be perfectly competent? Was it their intention that the several Electoral colleges, in the performance of their high duty, would have precisely the same liberty of choice with the dean and chapter of an English cathedral in the election of a bishop who has already received the appointment from the Crown, and whom they cannot refuse to vote for without incurring the penalties of a *premunire*?

I am now entirely convinced that great talents are not necessary for the chief magistracy of this nation. A moderate share of talents, with integrity of character and conduct, is all that is necessary. Under the principle of your amendment, I think there is little probability that a President would be elected, weaker than Col. ———, or with less practical common sense than Mr. ———. But I am not certain that the nation is prepared for such an amendment. There is something fascinating in the idea of selecting the best talents in the nation for the chief magistrate of the Union. The view which ought to decide in favor of the principle of your amendment, is seldom taken. The true view is this: elective chief magistrates are not, and cannot, in the nature of things, be the best men in the nation; while such elections never fail to produce mischief to the nation. The evils of such elections have generally induced civilized nations to submit to hereditary monarchy. Now the evil which is incident to this form of government, is that of having the oldest son of the monarch for ruler, whether he is a fool, a rascal, or a madman. I think no man who will reflect coolly upon the subject, but would prefer a President chosen by lot out of the Senate, to running the risk of having a fool, a rascal, or a madman, in the oldest son of the wisest and most benevolent sovereign that ever lived. When the amendment is considered in this point of view I think it will find favor, especially when it must be admitted that the election of a President in this manner will be productive of as little turmoil and agitation as the accession of the son to the father in hereditary monarchies. The more I reflect upon the subject, the more I am in favor of your amendment.

Mr. Hillhouse, after fourteen years of service in the Senate, resigned his seat that he might accept a new and more arduous trust to which he was invited by his native State, and for which he was eminently qualified by his peculiar talents, his great experience, and his high character for disinterestedness and public spirit as well as for strict fidelity to every duty.

The royal charters which had defined the boundaries of the States while they were colonies, gave to several of them, and to Connecticut among others, "the South Sea," or Pacific Ocean, for a western limit. In 1786, while Virginia and other States were marking their western boundaries at their own discretion, and ceding to Congress, with various reservations, their claims to territories farther west, the State of Connecticut, by its deed of cession, reserved to itself a new Connecticut on the southern shore of Lake Erie, of the same length, and between the same parallels of latitude, with the old Connecticut on the northern shore of Long Island Sound. A portion of the lands thus reserved was appropriated to indemnify the inhabitants of those towns which had been wholly or partially destroyed by the British forces in the war of the revolution. In May, 1795, the legislature made arrangements for the sale of the remainder, (not far from 3,300,000 acres in extent) by a commission of eight persons appointed for that purpose, the Hon. John Treadwell being chairman. By the same legislature it was ordained that the avails should constitute a permanent fund for the support of those common schools which had been from the beginning a characteristic institution of New England. At the October session of the same year, the commissioners reported that the land had been sold to a company of capitalists for the sum of 1,200,000 dollars, payable in five years, with annual interest after the expiration of two years. The fund thus established was continued in the care of the original commissioners till the year 1800, when payment from the purchasers of the Reserve became due. At that time Mr. Treadwell, afterwards governor, and four others, including the State Treasurer for the time being, were appointed "Managers of the funds arising on the sales of the Western Reserve," an arrangement which continued ten years. But notwithstanding the unquestioned fidelity of those "Managers," the expectations with which the fund was instituted had not been realized. The payments of interest which began to be due in 1797, instead of being $72,000 annually, as they should have been according to the conditions of the sale, fell so far short, that in thirteen years the average amount that had been annually distributed for the support of schools, was less than half the legal interest of the capital. From the report of the Managers to the legislature, at the October session in 1809, it appeared that not only that large amount of interest remained unpaid, but that considerable portions of the capital, also, were in danger of being lost by the failure of collateral securities. A committee, of which the Hon. David Daggett was chairman, recommended that the fund should be entrusted to the care and control of one man; and at the next session, in May, 1810, after due deliberation by the people as well as by their representatives, the office of "Commissioner of the School Fund" was created; and the Board of Managers was abolished.

As Mr. Hillhouse was wont to say that the office of President of the United States was made for George Washington, so we may say that in Connecticut the office of "Commissioner of the School Fund" was created at that juncture because all eyes were turned toward one man as singularly competent to so great and delicate a trust. The committee by whom the change of system in the management of the Fund was proposed to the legislature, had no other thought than of that one man to undertake the arduous work. Accordingly, when Mr. Hillhouse returned from Washington, after the adjournment of Congress, (which took place that year on the first of May) he was met by a call to this new office. He accepted the office, and his successor in the Senate (Hon Samuel W. Dana) was appointed at the same session of the legislature.

The condition of the School Fund, when it was committed to

his care, has already been described in part; but the difficulty of his task and the greatness of his success cannot be appreciated without a more complete statement on this point. Such a statement was made, not long after the death of Mr. Hillhouse, by the late Hon. Roger Minott Sherman, in a paper which he drew up with the expectation that it would be presented to the legislature. According to that well-considered statement, in which every word was measured with the accuracy so characteristic of the author, the Fund, in 1810, "had so diminished in value as to excite in the minds of the people a serious apprehension that in a few years it would become comparatively useless, if not utterly extinct. It consisted chiefly of the debts due from the original purchasers of the Western Reserve, and those substituted securities which had been accepted in their stead. A great proportion rested on mere personal security, and in the course of nearly twenty years, by death, insolvency, and the many other changes to which human affairs are subject, its actual value fell far short of its nominal amount. The interest had fallen greatly in arrear, and in many instances nearly equalled the principal. The debtors were dispersed in different States, and over a territory several hundred miles in extent; and such were the embarrassments of very many, and the complicated derangement of their affairs, that little but their ruin and the loss of the claims of the State could be expected from legal coercion." It may be added, to illustrate still further the complicated nature of the work that was to be done, that the thirty-six bonds amounting in the aggregate to $1,200,000, which were given by the original purchasers of the Reserve, and which were the original investment of the Fund, had become, by the process of payment and reinvestment or by other modes of substitution, nearly five hundred in number; and that, so far as they rested on any other than personal security, they were secured by mortgages on lands distributed through Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and the Western Reserve. Such was the trust which the State committed to his fidelity. So difficult, so complicated, so laborious, so delicate in many of its relations, was the work which he undertook for the State, and which employed his time and strength unremittingly through a period of fifteen years. For the first year of his service in that trust, his salary was only one thousand dollars. Afterwards he received fifteen hundred dollars annually, till October, 1818, when the compensation for his services was reduced to one thousand dollars, and so continued till his retirement from office. The State of Connecticut has never been celebrated for the munificence of its compensation to public officers; but we may doubt whether such services of those of James Hillhouse, in so responsible a trust, were ever rendered, even in Connecticut, for so slight a compensation. If the School Fund, in the condition in which it was when he received the trust, had been a private estate, to be settled, invested and managed for the same period of time, what would have been the compensation of a competent trustee?

In what manner, and with what measure of success, Mr. Hillhouse performed the work which he had undertaken for the State, cannot be better described than by quoting from the document already referred to, the words of the late Judge Sherman. "He accepted the office and held it until his resignation in 1825—a period of fifteen years. In this period, without a single litigated suit, or a dollar paid for counsel, he restored the Fund to safety and order—rendered it productive of large and increasing annual dividends, and left it augmented to seventeen hundred thousand dollars, of well secured and solid capital. During his administration of the School Fund he attended to little else. At all seasons of the year, however inclement, he journeyed over the extensive country through which his cares were dispersed—guarded the public land from depredation,—made himself familiar with every debtor and the state of his property—and by indefatigable labor, and by kind attention and assistance, improved the circumstances of improvident debtors, through the very measures which he pursued for the security of the Fund. Many families, and among them the widows and the orphans of deceased debtors, whose property had become incumbered by mortgages, contracts and speculations, and their hopes broken, and their exertions paralyzed, by the apparently inextricable condition of their affairs, were restored to easy circumstances by his wise disposition of their property and adjustment of their concerns. All his operations were characterized by a benevolent regard to individual interest, and an enthusiastic devotion to the public good."

The relation of debtor and creditor is not favorable to friendship, especially when the debtor is bankrupt or on the verge of bankruptcy, and the creditor is secured by mortgages and obligations which cannot be met without a serious loss. But Mr. Hillhouse made the debtors of the School Fund friends, by making himself their friend. Instead of acting against them as the mere attorney of an adverse party, he was their adviser, and acted with them and for them. The forbearance which he (with powers almost unlimited, save by his own fidelity to his trust) was able to

exercise towards embarrassed but honest debtors,—the legal and financial counsel which he was so well qualified to give, and the aid which, in one way or another, he could so often render when the claims of other creditors were pressed too urgently—were all at the service of his great and kindly heart. Thus while he was far more careful for the safety of the Fund than if it had been his own, he became the benefactor of debtors who could not have extricated themselves from their embarrassments by any efforts of their own, and in whose final insolvency the State would have been a losing creditor. In some remarkable instances, the aid which he gave to embarrassed debtors of the Fund in the settlement of their affairs, was acknowledged with a gratitude which deserves a distinct commemoration.

Among the original purchasers of the Western Reserve, the names of Oliver Phelps and Gideon Granger are conspicuous. Mr. Phelps was the agent of the company by which the purchase was effected; and of the thirty-six subscriptions to the capital of twelve hundred thousand dollars, one of eighty thousand was the joint subscription of Phelps and Granger, and another of more than one hundred and sixty-eight thousand was in the name of Phelps alone. Of the remaining subscriptions, three, from as many individuals, were of sixty thousand each, and all the others were in various amounts from nearly fifty-eight thousand down to less than seventeen hundred. Twenty-five years later, the expected results of the speculation on the part of Messrs. Phelps and Granger had not been realized, and the aggregate of their original indebtedness to the School Fund, great as it was at the beginning, had greatly increased. Harassed by other creditors, Mr. Phelps, though rich in lands that could not be converted into money, had died while imprisoned for debt. How his embarrassed affairs were settled after his death, how the School Fund was kept unharmed, is best described by Judge Sherman. "His debt to the School Fund, including a balance due from his son, was nearly *three hundred thousand dollars*. He left an extensive property in new lands, but was deeply in debt at the time of his decease, and had suspended payment, until his arrears of interest to this State, which had been accumulating for ten years, exceeded *fifty-six thousand dollars*. His immense real estate was heavily encumbered with mortgages, and so involved and perplexed with executory contracts and unperfected titles, as seemed to defy any attempt at extrication, and render the claims of this State and other creditors apparently hopeless. But nothing which human effort could

tend to surmount, ever discouraged Mr. Hillhouse. Great obstacles seemed but to inspirit his resolution and give vigor to his exertions. The condition of this estate had baffled the efforts and appalled the heart of its enterprising proprietor, and saddened his last days with embarrassment and despondency. But Mr. Hillhouse went into the western country where it lay, and by long, laborious, and patient exertions night and day, he threaded all its labyrinths, cleared off every embarrassment, paid up in full the debt to the School Fund and the claims of every other creditor, dealt out perfect justice to every party in interest, and restored the widow and orphan children of Mr. Phelps to comfort and affluence. A large ledger is filled with the numerous accounts of sales, payments and settlements which arose in the course of the transactions."

How much he gained for the State by all this extra-official labor performed in the interest of what some would have regarded as the adverse party, let Judge Sherman tell. "So much were the family of Mr. Phelps benefited by the services which he rendered them, beyond what the interests of this State required, that besides paying all the expenses incident to the operation in searching records, foreclosing mortgages, defraying taxes, paying agents, &c., they allowed compound interest on the School Fund debt, which exceeded more than fourteen thousand five hundred dollars, the amount which could have been recovered by law. He placed the demand of the State, which had been deemed almost worthless, on an interest of *seven per cent.*, amply secured by bonds and mortgages."

But the concession of compound interest on the great and long deferred indebtedness of that estate to the Connecticut School Fund, did not satisfy in the heirs the sense of their obligation to their benefactor. "The family of Mr. Phelps had once been in affluence, but had fallen into a state of want and embarrasment, in which they had long been involved. They were now restored to competency by the extraordinary exertions of Mr. Hillhouse in their behalf. Having consented that full and ample justice should be done the State, they gratefully tendered to Mr. Hillhouse the sum of *six thousand dollars* for his own personal use, and begged him to accept it."

Such a testimonial of a grateful sense of obligation on their part, deserves to be remembered for their sake as well as for his. But did he accept their offer? He did. Yet strange as it may seem, and hardly credible in these days of plunder and official venality,

he "declined retaining a donation from those with whom he dealt as a public agent, and paid the six thousand dollars into the treasury of the School Fund." This "delicate sense of honor" was actually extant less than thirty years ago, in a man who had been almost twenty years a member of Congress, and who came directly from Washington to the management of a great pecuniary trust for the public.

At the time of these transactions, Mr. Granger, the associate of Mr. Phelps, was still living, after a long career of public service; and his sense of the value of similar services rendered in the settlement of his indebtedness to the State of Connecticut, was acknowledged by a similar testimonial amounting to nearly twenty-five hundred dollars. At the same time, an allowance of more than fifteen hundred dollars was made to him, for the same reason, in the settlement of another estate largely indebted to the Fund—that of Arnold Potter. These donations were also passed over to the School Fund. The entire amount of what he thus, from a high sense of honor, transferred to the State, was only less than ten thousand dollars ($9,982,02)—every cent of it fairly his own earning by extra-official labor.

The extent to which his bodily power of activity and endurance was tasked in the great and crowning work of his life, cannot be adequately described within the limits of this brief memoir. At his entrance on the work, he was already passing into the evening of life, when most men, amid the lengthening shadows, think rather of retirement and repose than of new and more arduous enterprises. But no young emigrant making his way into the wilderness to lay there the foundations of future wealth, ever encountered hardships, fatigue and peril, more patiently or cheerfully than he. Unattended, he made long journeys westward, year after year, at all seasons, and with all sorts of hazards, in his sulky, at the heels of the fleet and hardy little mare that was his chief locomotive power for the first six or eight years of his commissionership. Once he came near death by freezing in a winter drive; twice by fever caught in miasmatic regions which his duty required him to explore. But it is safe to say, that whether using the utmost speed of his mare to leave at a safe distance behind him some dogging ruffians who had attempted to rob him, or making his way slowly through the woods with an armed Indian silently and wistfully trotting at his side, or arrested as a criminal at the instigation of a malicious debtor (which was once the case), he never lost for an hour his courage or cheerful good humor. No difficulties of the

way could ever turn him back. The story is told that "after half a day's solitary traveling, he once came to a stream, apparently swollen with rain to an unusual depth. It was necessary to cross it, or be frustrated of his object, besides measuring back a weary way. He undressed himself, strapped his trunk of clothes, papers, &c., on the top of his sulky, and reached the opposite bank with no other inconvenience than an unseasonable bath."*

What Mr. Hillhouse did for the School Fund in the fifteen years of his administration, was in many respects a different work from that which has devolved on any of his successors. It was for him to extricate the Fund from the embarrassed and imperilled condition in which it was committed to his care. It was for him to arrange and institute a system of administration; the department was to be all but created by his constructive genius. He labored as a pioneer, preparing the way in which others were to follow. His immediate successor, (Hon. Seth P. Beers,) who had been for two years his assistant, entered upon the work when the age of railway traveling had not yet begun, and when the superintendence of the School Fund was still attended with more personal fatigue and hardship than belonged to any other office in the service of the State. But the second Commissioner entered into the labors of the first; and it is no disparagement of his ability or of his success, to say that his work during the twenty-four years of his administration was easy in comparison with the pioneer work which had already been done. In those years of pioneer labor, Mr. Hillhouse had not merely rescued the Fund from depreciation and gradual destruction, and restored it to its original value. By his indefatigable industry and skill in the collection of debts, and by the wisdom of his reinvestments, he had added to it more than half a million of dollars. The policy which he inaugurated was continued by his successor, at the close of whose administration the Fund had received another augmentation of three hundred thousand dollars,—and though the capital has received since then no farther augmentation, the investments have become more productive, till now the annual income is seven per cent. on the entire amount of the Fund. In the fifty-six years since the first dividend was made, the School Fund of Connecticut has divided among the towns and school societies an aggregate amount of income almost four times greater than the capital was at the beginning. The traditions of his administration still give to the office a dignity which lifts it above the ordinary sweep of party revolution, and

*Dramas, Discourses, &c., by James A. Hillhouse, II., 42-44, 51-54.

guards it against being made, like so many other offices of trust and honor, a reward for party services. If that magnificent endowment yields any benefit to the people of Connecticut to-day—if it diminishes the weight of their public burthens, and distributes to all parts of the State, year by year, for the most important of all public interests, a greater revenue than all that the people pay in taxes for their own State government—if it secures a free school in every neighborhood and within the reach of every family, and leaves hardly a native adult that cannot read and write—it is to him more than to any other man that the debt of public gratitude is due. Others now living, who need not be named, and who will not be forgotten when they shall have been gathered to the dead, have contributed to make the School Fund efficient for the ends to which it was devoted, have taught the people how to use it, have kept it from becoming a disgrace instead of a glory to the State; but the Fund itself is the patrimony which his heroic labor rescued and enlarged, and which, by the success of his wise and faithful stewardship, became an inheritance forever for the State he loved so well.

At the time of Mr. Hillhouse's retirement from the Commissionership in the seventy-first year of his age, the citizens of New Haven had determined on attempting the construction of a canal from their own harbor to the Connecticut River at Northampton. He had taken no leading part either in the consultations and discussions which preceded that determination, or in the application which obtained from the legislature of the State a charter with a full grant of necessary powers to a company organized for the purpose. But his townsmen, from the day in which he led the young men of the town to battle in defense of their homes, had been accustomed to confide implicitly in his ability to accomplish whatever he might be induced to undertake. Through all the fifty years of his participation in their public affairs, there had hardly been a scheme or effort of local improvement in which he had not been a leader. His own judgment, confirmed by that of men whose large experience and acknowledged wisdom in such matters gave authority to their opinions, had been convinced that the proposal was practicable and would open for the commerce of New Haven a most desirable channel of communication with the interior of New England. He yielded to the solicitations of his neighbors and accepted from the company the appointment of Superintendent. His connection with the work, and the unfailing zeal and force with which he entered into it, inspired the people of New

Haven, and of other towns along the route, with much of his own confidence in its success. Six years he sustained it through every discouragement, and then, beginning at last to feel that it was time for him to rest, he resigned the task to younger hands. The construction of that canal was indeed a loss to the Company; but the explanation of the failure is chiefly to be found in causes that were then beyond the ken of human sagacity. Only a few out of the many works of that sort in the United States have ever repaid to the proprietors the expense of construction. Nobody now thinks of making a canal unless it be something like a ship canal across a narrow isthmus between oceans. Five and thirty years ago nobody thought that the time was at hand when railways would be constructed for the convenience of commerce along the shores of navigable waters, when the whole extent of the Union, from Maine to Louisiana, would be overspread with a network of iron tracks, and when even the wildernesses beyond the Mississippi would begin to be made attractive to emigration, by the construction of railways over prairies hardly yet deserted of the Indian and the buffalo.

The connection of Mr. Hillhouse, from youth to old age, with all the progress of local improvement in New Haven, has already been referred to, but deserves a more particular notice. One strong indication of a man's character, and of the force with which he has acted upon his fellow-men, is found, sometimes at least, in the impression which he has left upon the place of his abode, and the extent in which his influence has incorporated itself with the history and the future of the locality. Since Theophilus Eaton and John Davenport, with others from the parish of St. Stephens, Coleman Street, in London, came to Quinnipiack in 1638, and laid out their beautiful town-plat around the open square which they reserved for their public buildings, their market-place, and their graves, no man has ever done so much by personal influence and labor for the beauty of New Haven, as was done by James Hillhouse. He had a part in the subdivision of the original nine squares, by new streets parallel to the old, and a voice in giving both to the old streets and the new the names which they still bear.* He was the engineer (probably chairman of a committee)

* A part of the ancient town was incorporated as a city, at a winter session of the legislature in 1784, Mr. H. being then a representative. At the first city election, Feb., 1784 he was chosen into the Common Council. The streets were named by vote of a city meeting, Sept. 17 1784. The new streets, subdividing the old town-plat, appear to have been opened by the owners of the property at their own convenience and discretion, according to some plan spontaneously

who leveled "the lower green," as the lower half of the public square was called, and enclosed the whole square for the first time, cutting off the winding cart path that ran diagonally from the northwestern corner to the southeastern. He brought from a farm of his in Meriden, and set out, partly with his own hands, the elms that now interlock their giant arms over the famous colonnade of Temple street. The once renowned but now half deserted turnpike road from New Haven to Hartford, with its marvelous rectilinearity, was not indeed laid out under his direction (his common sense would have avoided the hills); but after the line had been determined, and the work imperfectly constructed, in his absence, the completion of it was effected by his executive ability.* He formed and carried into effect the plan of the New Haven Cemetery which has now become so honored with historic graves—his own among the most illustrious. That was the earliest attempt anywhere to provide a public cemetery so arranged that every family might have its own family burial place as an inalienable possession like Abraham's burial place at Hebron. The records of the parish of which he was a member testify to his activity and zeal in promoting the interests of that ecclesiastical society. Five successive pastors of the church in which he made his early vows, learned to value his generous friendship; and the last of them, having pronounced the eulogium at his funeral more than a quarter of a century ago, is permitted now, after so long a time, to commend him to the grateful remembrance of another generation.

One office Mr. Hillhouse retained to the close of his life. For fifty years he was the Treasurer of Yale College. In all his cares and labors for the town, for the State, and for the Union, he never ceased to care affectionately for the venerable institution in which

agreed upon. Mr. H., as a proprietor, had an agency in the opening of some of those streets; and the writer of this note remembers to have heard him express a regret that he did not insist on carrying every street through in a straight line to the water, viz: to the harbor in one direction, and from Mill River to West River in the other.

* In connection with Mr. Hillhouse's superintendence of the Hartford and New Haven turnpike road, a story is extant, which if it is only a myth, is nevertheless worth repeating in a Journal of Education. The tradition is that while Mr. H. was making the road, he was visited by Gen. Wade Hampton, of South Carolina, one of his associates in the House of Representatives. Of course it was a part of "the Sachem's" hospitality to show his Southern friend the great work that was in progress. The well trained oxen, as well as other things that he saw, were much admired by the stranger. "See," said he to the negro servant who attended him, "how those oxen work! Tom! they know more than you do." "Ah! Mas'r," said the negro in reply, "Dem ar oxen has had a Yankee bringing up."

he had been educated. A special service which he rendered to that institution at the time of its greatest peril, entitles him to be commemorated among its greatest benefactors. The college, founded by the clergy, yet patronized and aided to some extent, in its early days, by the State, had always been under the government of an exclusively clerical corporation. Very naturally, some degree of jealousy had long existed between the corporation of the college and certain leading influences in the government of the State. After the revolutionary war, the college, which had shared deeply in the general impoverishment of the country, had not begun to share in the return of prosperity and the progress of wealth. Its expectations of aid from the State were met with various demands for such a modification of its charter as would at least divide the control of the institution between the clergy and the legislature or the politicians. In some quarters there were plans on foot for another institution to be governed by the State. At last, in the years 1791–2, these difficulties were coming to a crisis. A legislative committee was appointed to inquire into the affairs of the institution. Mr. Hillhouse came home from his place in Congress to attend the corporation in their conference with that committee, which was supposed to be not favorable to the then existing constitution of the college. His advice to the corporation was that they should meet the committee with all frankness and confidence, and with the fullest exposition not only of their financial affairs and necessities, but of their policy in the management of the college, and of their hopes and wishes for the future. They adopted his advice, and the result was that the committee made a report highly favorable to the fidelity and ability with which the college had been governed by the corporation. Just at that time Hamilton's great measure for the assumption by the Federal government of the debts which the several States had contracted for the common cause in the revolutionary struggle, had been carried through Congress. The State of Connecticut had laid taxes to meet the interest, and, in part, the principal of its revolutionary debt; and large amounts of those taxes, payable in evidences of that debt, were at that moment in the hands of collectors throughout the State. If those amounts were paid over by the collectors to the treasury of the State they would cease to be, what in reality they were, a portion of that revolutionary debt which had been assumed by the Federal government; or, in other words, the State would resume and discharge a portion of the debt which had just been assumed by the Union. Mr. Hillhouse had conceived the

idea of ceding to Yale College all those outstanding taxes which were payable in evidences of the revolutionary debt. It was at his advice that the Corporation of the College had presented the plan to the legislature in a memorial. As an inducement to the grant, he proposed, the value of it not being yet ascertained, that one half of the amount which the college might realize in stock of the United States from the cession of those evidences of the State debt, should be transferred by the corporation to the State, for the use and benefit of the State itself. He well knew that there were strong prejudices to be avoided or subdued, and many difficulties to be overcome. Among those members of the legislature who had no prejudices against the college, and whose intelligence recognized the importance of such an institution to the State, there were some who had no faith whatever that the scheme could succeed. But with his characteristic tact and skill, he addressed himself directly to another class of members, the "substantial farmers," who are even to this day the ruling class in Connecticut. In his plain, honest way, he availed himself of the great confidence which men of that class always had in him. He made them feel that the college was an institution in which the whole State had an interest, and of which the State ought to be proud. He made them see that the State as well as the college had a pecuniary interest in his plan. His perseverance and the strength of his personal influence, at last prevailed; and the measure was carried chiefly by the sympathies and the votes of that very class who had no literary or professional interest in the college. An instinctive confidence in the plain good sense and the public spirit of the people, was characteristic of Mr. Hillhouse, and was one reason why the people always had confidence in him and were ready to follow him.

At the same time a change in the charter of the college was effected partly, at least, by his influence. The legislature was induced to content itself with proposing, and the corporation was persuaded to accept, a modification by which, while the ten clerical "Fellows" who represent the original founders were to retain the right of filling their own vacancies in perpetual succession, the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor, and six senior Assistants (now Senators) of the State government for the time being, were to be also members of the Corporation. By this arrangement many ancient jealousies were removed; and Yale College was not indeed subjected to the State, to be mixed up in all the strifes of politics, but placed in a natural and just connection with the civil government of the commonwealth. In the language of President Stiles,

"Moses and Aaron were united." Never, it is believed, has there been any collision or friction in the working of this arrangement. The only thing to be regretted is that of late years the contemptible principle of "rotation in office," superseding the old principle of "steady habits," has too much deprived the Corporation of the dignity and strength which it ought to receive from its alliance with the State. Senators who have been elevated to office because it was their turn, and who are sure to be displaced next year because they will have had their day of honor, if they happen to be designated by lot as "Senior Senators," can hardly be expected to take much interest in the one meeting of the Corporation which takes place each year.

The memorable "Act for enlarging the powers and increasing the funds of Yale College," saved the institution. It brought to the treasury a net amount of about forty thousand dollars. Out of that sum, administered with exemplary economy, building after building, arranged according to a plan which Mr. Hillhouse and the artist Trumbull had devised, was added to the line of college edifices. Under the administration of President Dwight, which began three years after the passage of that act, the course of studies, the system of government, and the provisions and arrangements for instruction, were gradually but rapidly modified to meet the exigencies of the times. The increased resort of students was more than parallel with the increase of accommodations. In process of time, as the poverty of the institution, in relation to the work it had to do, was made the more conspicuous by its growing usefulness and its spreading renown, friends and benefactors began to appear, whose donations or legacies still kept it from sinking. Its Alumni in all parts of the Union, came to its aid. New departments of instruction in the learned professions were organized, and to some extent endowed; and before Mr. Hillhouse ceased to be treasurer, the college became, in fact, a university though not affecting the grandeur of so lofty a name.

It is not strange then, that when, in his old age, he had relinquished all other offices and public employments, and had retired into the bosom of his family, where he was preparing himself for his last repose, he still retained his official connection with the college. On the 18th of December, 1832, the sudden death of the Assistant Treasurer, Stephen Twining, Esq., threw upon him an unusual and urgent pressure of business, in preparation for the Prudential Committee of the Corporation. On the 29th of December, he attended the meeting of that Committee. About noon,

after a session of several hours, he returned to his house, as he had gone out, hale, erect, cheerful, with no weakness in his step and no dimness in his eye. He sat down with the family, and while conversing with them, began to open the letters which had come to hand that morning. As he was reading a letter on college business, he rose from his chair, and without saying anything, went into his bedroom. Only a moment had passed when his son, having occasion to speak to him, followed him. But the old man was asleep. He had lain down quietly upon his bed, and a gentle touch from some kind angel had released him from his labors.

Those who have a personal remembrance of Mr. Hillhouse are growing few. But of the vividness with which his form and looks and character rise before their minds at the mention of his name, after the lapse of so many years since he was carried to his grave, it is difficult to give a just impression. This brief narrative of his long life, and of his many public services, cannot convey to those who never saw him, any adequate notion of what he was; still less can the writer hope to set before them by any analysis, or to portray by any art of word-painting, the remarkable and memorable peculiarities of the man.

Physically, as well as in his characteristic moral and mental constitution, he was cast in a heroic mold. Without any extraordinary personal beauty—without any statuesque symmetry or finish of figure and features—his face and person were such that no stranger could look upon him for a moment without looking again and saying to himself, 'That is no ordinary man.' Tall, long-limbed, with high cheek-bones, swarthy, lithe in motion, lightness in his step, and strength and freedom in his stride, he seemed a little like some Indian Chief of poetry or romance—the Outalissi of Campbell's Gertrude of Wyoming—the Massasoit or King Philip of our early history as fancy pictures them—so much so that with a kind of affectionate respect he was sometimes called "the Sachem."

It has already been said that his genius and the constitutional elements of his character were such as might have achieved distinction in a military career. The blood of the old Pequot-queller, John Mason, and of the heroic defenders in the siege of Derry was mingled in his veins; and it is safe to say that nobody ever saw him frightened or disconcerted. But mere courage qualifies no man to be a leader. He had that sort of natural leadership among his equals; that special faculty of influence over men, that power of winning their full confidence and of making them willing to follow where

he led, which is given only in nature's patent of nobility. He had an intuitive knowledge of men, whoever they were with whom he had to do:—without any suspiciousness in his nature, or any slowness in yielding his confidence, he was rarely deceived in those whom he trusted. His prompt discernment of exigencies, and the exhaustless fertility of his resources, gave him an instantaneous quickness of adaptation to whatever emergency. It was by this military combination of qualities in his mental constitution and development, that he accomplished so much for the town he lived in, for his native State, and for his country.

Had he been a selfish man—had his nature lacked the glow and charm of living sympathies—the development and organization of his entire character would have differed from what it was. His spontaneous and genial affectionateness, not only in his family but in every relation—his frank heartiness in all intercourse with friends and neighbors—his ready sensibility to whatsoever things are true or honest, or just, or pure, or lovely or of good report—in a word, the generosity of his nature, even more than the undoubted superiority of his intellectual powers, commanded the full confidence of all who had to do with him and of all who knew him. What was admired and honored in James Hillhouse was, not the man's extraordinary ability—not his eloquence or his wit—not the depth and reach of his learning, or the acuteness and power of his logic,—but the man himself. It was his integrity, in the original and largest sense of that word—the *wholeness* of his manly nature with all manly affections and sympathies as well as manly powers, that commanded homage. In his earlier years, before he had given himself up entirely to public affairs, he was rising to eminence as an advocate, arguing cases with distinguished success before the highest tribunals; and sometimes when Hamilton and Burr, with the splendor and authority of the one and the unscrupulous genius and cunning of the other, were both arrayed against him. He could not undertake a cause without first gaining in his own mind an assurance of its justice; and when he came to the argument, with his most unaffected honesty and earnestness in every word and look, that assurance of his being in the right communicated itself to those who heard him. The nature of the confidence which his fellow-citizens had in him may be illustrated by a story that is still repeated in New Haven, and is not without a moral. Long ago, when parties had hardly been organized in Connecticut, it happened that a leading man whose name is not essential to the point of the story, but of whom we may say that

he had aspirations as well as opinions, went out on some occasion from New Haven into one of the neighboring towns to make a political speech. The school-house, in which the orator held forth, was filled with plain but thinking farmers, who gave a silent attention while he tried to show them with plausible arguments and at great length, how much they were wronged by the then existing administration of their public affairs. When he had finished, one of his hearers rose and gave him this conclusive reply: "Mr.——, you are a *larned* man, and you know a great deal more than we do; but we know one thing, and that is that Jemmy Hillhouse is an honester man than you be."

The combination of simplicity and dignity in Mr. Hillhouse was altogether unique. The simplicity and the dignity being alike unaffected, were not merely combined; they were one and the same thing. They were the perfectly unconscious manifestation of a strong and self-reliant mind, rich with various knowledge and the shrewdest common sense, controled by the highest moral principles, and alive with every manly affection and every honorable sensibility. With what statesmanlike propriety and force of expression, and with what command of classical English, he could discuss high questions of government, is sufficiently shown on some of the foregoing pages by extracts from the Congressional debates; yet his speaking on all occasions was characterised by that ancient New England pronunciation which was simply the pure and true pronunciation of our mother tongue as it was before the reign of Charles II., but which is now so rarely heard from educated persons or in connection with refinement of thought and manners. His ordinary colloquial discourse, often humorous, often full of the most interesting personal reminiscences, always instructive, was enriched with quaint New England idioms and homely Connecticut proverbs. In all this there was no lack of dignity, for his way of speaking was simply antique, not vulgar. His pronunciation was such as Milton used, and Hampden; and even those Doric colloquialisms of his were, for the most part, such as Brewster and Winthrop, Haynes and Eaton, might have brought with them from England. Yet it would be an injustice to his memory if the reader should think of him as using purposely the antique style in anything, or imagine his old age as decorated with the wig and the shoe buckles which old men wore when he was young. As he did not affect the antique in speech, he was equally above all affectation of the antique in costume. He was not performing a part in a play, and had therefore no occasion to dress in character. Doubtless he wore knee-buckles and powdered hair when he was young; but in his venerable age, when buckles and powder had gone out of fashion, they could have added nothing to his dignity. Those little archaisms of dress are sometimes graceful in an old man, and dignified; but they would hardly have befitted him. He was as dignified with his coat off and with a scythe in his hands, leading the mowers across the field, and cutting the widest swarth of all, as when he stood conspicuous and honored in the Senate, or on a Sabbath morning walked to the house of prayer with patriarchal grace, beneath the stately elms which his own hands had planted. Everybody in his presence felt his dignity; but the dignity was in the man, not in the manner His dignity was not put on, and could not be put off. It was nothing else than his transparent simplicity, continually revealing an unaffected nobleness of soul.

None will suppose that in a public career so long as his, and so full of the most various activity, and with so much independence and resoluteness of mind, he encountered no unfriendly opposition and no reproach from "evil tongues." With all the traits that made him popular, with all his tact in guiding and influencing men, and with all the kindliness of his disposition, he was still just the man to encounter, now and then, some unexpected and violent hostility. Nor was he by nature "slow to wrath." He was so constituted that he had a quick and impetuous sensibility to injury and especially to insult. Yet his religious principles and habits suffered him to harbor no resentment. As a Christian man he had learned to restrain his vindictive feelings, to bear injury with patience, and to repel insult and make it contemptible by the dignity and magnanimity of meekness.

This last mentioned feature in his character might be referred in part to his habitual regard for other interests than his own. As he was not living for himself it was the easier for him to be magnanimous under any personal wrong. Not only so, but the largeness of the plan on which he lived, helped to lift him above the depression of whatever personal disappointments and sorrows were in his lot, and to illuminate the entire sphere of his activity and his enjoyments. In words that were spoken at his burial, "He aimed at the public good. He lived for his country. Thus his activity was activity freed from the corrosion of selfishness, and in all his toil there was a consciousness of noble purposes which

lightened every labor, and even took away from disappointment the power to vex him. Thus his soul was expanded into more colossal dimensions, his being, as it were, spread out and extended. There was more of existence in a day of his life than there would be in centuries of some men's living. His influence, his voluntary influence to do good, being thus extended, he lived with a sort of ubiquity, wherever that influence was felt,—happy in the consciousness of living to good purpose. And for all this he was none the less happy—he was far more happy—in his family, and in all the relations of private and personal friendship. The way to enjoy home with the highest zest, the way to have the fireside bright with the most quiet, heartfelt happiness, is to be active even to weariness, and to come home for refreshment and repose. The way to give new vigor and delight to all the pulses of domestic love and private friendship, is to enlarge the soul and prove it kindred to higher orders of existence by the culture of large and generous affections."

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PROFESSOR GEORGE P. FISHER, PROFESSOR TIMOTHY DWIGHT,

AND

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Article VII.—A VOICE FROM "SQUASHVILLE:" A LETTER TO THE NEW ENGLANDER FROM THE "REV. MR. PICKERING."

Mr. W. W. Phelps, in his speech at the last commencement dinner, spoke of "Rev. Mr. Pickering of Squashville," as a clerical member of the corporation of Yale College, and described him as "exhausted with keeping a few sheep in the wilderness." He will not charge me with excessive modesty on the one hand, nor with any unreasonable self-esteem on the other, if I assume that I am the unfortunate individual thus referred to. If I am not, I do not know who is. Any one of the ten clerical Fellows has a right to assume that the courtesy was intended for him; and my right is at least as good as that of any of my nine associates.

When I heard Mr. Phelps on that occasion, I was not sure that I saw precisely the aim of his discourse; on reading and re-perusing what seems to be his own report of his speech, my perplexity is not entirely removed. He undertakes to represent "the younger alumni," and to express their dissatisfaction with "the management of the college." He admits that in scholarship it "keeps progress with the age," but he holds that in everything else it is behind the times. He "finds no fault with the *men*" who manage, but "much fault with the *spirit* of the management." The men with whom he finds no fault are "the President and Professors," whose "superiority to ordinary men" he recognizes with growing "admiration and love." He claims for President Woolsey what the Spanish orator said of Lincoln, "Humblest of the humble before his own soul, greatest of the great before the world." He "claims for Porter, Hadley, Thacher, and their noble associates" nothing less than "the highest moral and intellectual gifts unselfishly devoted to the cause of education." But—oddly enough—while the men who manage are so transcendently gifted and self-sacrificing, "the spirit of the management," without any fault on their part, is just that which does not "keep progress with the age."

Thus far the fault-finding, though it strikes expressly at every thing except the "scholarship" which that defective management produces, is not very specific. Mr. Phelps had indeed told us that "the spirit of the management" is "too conservative and narrow;" but in that proposition the subject ("spirit of the management") is indefinite, and the predicate ("too conservative and narrow") is equally indefinite. We, therefore, whose misfortune is to be Pickerings, and to live and labor in our several Squashvilles instead of flourishing under the municipal government of New York, expected that our friend would condescend to some specifications of the "too conservative and narrow" spirit in which our college is managed by the President and Professors. And what did he say? Here it is in his own words:

> "The College wants a living connection with the world without—an infusion of some of the new blood which throbs in every vein of this mighty republic—a knowledge of what is wanted in the scenes for which Yale educates her children:—this living connection with the outer world—this knowledge of people's wants, can be acquired only from those who are in the people and of the people."

Is it so? Is there now no connection between Yale College (Mr. P. evidently means the Academical department) and the world without? One-fourth of all the students come into college every year fresh from the outside world; another fourth every year drop out of college into the same world; and for the space of three months in each year, every mother's son of them is quite cut off from cloistered life, and is tossing about in the same great world with Mr. Phelps and the rest of us. Surely the vital connection between the students and the interest and sympathies of their homes is never sundered by their being in college; and their homes, if they have any on this sublunar sphere, are in the world without. And what of the Professors? Do they not live in the world as really as other Christians? Are they nothing but mummied specimens of Mediæval, or, at the latest, Puritan humanity! When they go into the streets, do they wear the costume of some buried age, and stare like ghosts revisiting the glimpses of the moon? Do they go about like Johnny Look-in-the-air, stumbling into ditches because they cannot see what lies before them? They are citizens in a free commonwealth—householders, husbands, fathers; and is

not that connection with the outer world just as vital as if, instead of being professors, they were shoemakers or stock-jobbers? They read the daily newspapers; and though few of them have time to study all the fluctuations of Wall street, they have reason to know exactly, for they feel continually, the difference between gold and currency. They have dealings with butchers and grocers, like other heads of families Their wives go a-shopping, and they pay the bills, like other good husbands. Being not only citizens but voters, they are interested in all public questions. They have opinions of their own not only about the war in Europe, but also about all sorts of matters nearer home, from the election of an alderman to the election of a President, the reconstruction of reconquered States, the payment of the national debt, the Alabama question with Great Britain, and the general American policy of protecting everybody's industry by oppressing the industry of everybody else. If they have not a vital connection with the world outside of their lecture rooms, how can it be made out that any man has a vital connection with the world outside of his own warehouse or workshop? Mr. Phelps, no doubt, has a vital connection with the world of New York, but his connection with the world outside is somewhat defective if he does not know that one of our Professors was even talked of for Governor and has been defeated as a candidate for congress. At this moment one of the Academical Faculty holds an important office under the government of the United States, and another occupies a place of trust and honor (without much pay) in the government of Connecticut. I cannot see that, either on the part of the students or on the part of the Faculty, there is any want of a natural and healthy connection between the college and the great world of human society.

But I must not forget that our friend (for most heartly do I recognise him as a friend of his *Alma Mater*) gives another specification under his sweeping charge that the management of the college—or the spirit of it—is "too conservative and narrow." Speaking in the name of "young Yale," he affirms that the growth of the college is checked by the "utter absence" of "that worldiness which is not inconsistent

with godliness,"—in other words (as he explains it), "that recognition of human weakness and infirmity "to which all successful men "cater." He illustrates the importance of catering to human weakness by saying.

> "Don't let Harvard, our great rival, alone have the benefit of it—let Yale condescend to be worldly-wise. The son of a President is about entering college. Yale says, it is worldly to secure him. We will make no effort to secure him. Saintly Yale folds her arms in true dignity of saintliness, and young Vicksburg goes to Harvard. The press, in a telegram, carries the fact to hamlet and prairie, and the fame of Harvard enters a thousand households for the first time. It is commencement time; Yale says, Learning, not festivity, is the true object of a college. We will not cater to the weaknesses of alumni by offering other attractions than the philosophical orations of its graduating class. Five hundred Yalensians, needing a very little impetus to gather them under the old trees, find nothing, and stay away. Five hunded Harvard men, needing the same impetus, pack their portmanteaus and go to Cambridge because Lord Lacklaw and the Hon. Mr. Blower, the distinguished senator from Alaska, will be on the platform. Harvard takes great poets and historians to fill its vacant Professorships,—Yale takes boys, who have proved their qualifications by getting their windows broken as tutors."

Excuse my making so long a quotation. I might have exposed myself to a charge of misrepresentation, had I attempted to give the substance of it in any fewer words. Here then we have the thing fairly set forth—that worldliness within the limits of godliness—that catering to human weakness and infirmity—which is the grand secret of success; and which abounds at Harvard but is utterly absent from Yale. See how blessed it is to have worldly wisdom! Harvard, after the fashion of a New York dry-goods jobbing house, sends out "drummers" to beat up for customers; and behold "young Vicksburg" goes to Cambridge, when, if Yale had only drummed loud enough, he might have gone to New Haven. Harvard makes her commencements attractive to the high culture of her alumni by obtaining the presence of Lord Lacklaw and Senator Blower; while Yale offers to her assembled graduates nothing more sensational than a discourse from the illustrious President of Princeton. Harvard puts great poets and historians into her vacant professorships,—while Yale generally takes for professors in her Academical Faculty young men whom she herself has trained in and for the business of college teaching. Admitting that all this about Harvard is true—which I do most

potently disbelieve—I will venture to say what we who live at Squashville think about the worldly wisdom which our friend esteems so highly.

1. This Mr. Worldly-wise-man (whom I do by no means identify with our friend his admirer) is a snob. In my particular Squashville, and in all the Squashvilles, we have a very high regard for President Grant; but we discriminate broadly between him and that respectable old gentleman Mr. Jesse Grant, and just as broadly between the President and that undoubtedly respectable young man his son, now supposed to be a Freshman at Cambridge. If President Grant's son is a good boy and a bright one, he is worth as much in a well-regulated college as any other boy of the same mental and moral quality —and no more. I venture to suggest that, especially in the United States, the university or college that attempts to thrive by tuft-hunting is making itself contemptible, and can be saved only by being cured of its snobbishness. The suggestion that the "management" of Harvard College has taken special pains to get President Grant's son under its tuition—though intended as a compliment—could hardly be accepted as better than an insult.

Mr. Phelps may regard it as a new proof of poor Pickering's incapacity, if I tell him frankly that in Squashville every tub is expected to stand on its own bottom, and not on the bottom of any ancestral tub however great or glorious. In our way of thinking, the value of a student is measured by what he is, and not by his father's official or social position, nor by the wealth which he is expected to inherit. The glory of a college is not in the parentage of the boys who go into it, but in the cultured manliness of the men who come out of it. For that reason I would rather that the young men who resort to Yale College should be the sons of middle class families, or even of families whose life is a struggle with poverty, than that they should be sons of millionaires, and if I were to choose between two young men equal in talent and in moral qualities—one the son of a President, or of a Secretary of State, or of a railroad king,—and the other the son of a Connecticut farmer, or of a working mechanic, or of a country pastor—I would say give us the young man who knows that he must be the architect of

his own fortune and is compelled to be frugal, and let the other go to Harvard or anywhere else, if he must go where he will be flattered because of his father's money or his father's position. Let our college be attractive to young men whose education is to be achieved by strenuous effort and more strenuous self-denial,—let the tone of sentiment in the college and the scale of necessary expenditure be determined by their influence; and every rich man whose son is worth having as a student will be in earnest to have his son educated at Yale, rather than at any college that sends out drummers to gather in young men from "the first families," and where the habits of the academic body are molded by deference to wealth and station.

2. As for the practice of appointing celebrated poets and historians to vacant professorships, it may suffice to say (without inquiring whether there is or has been such a practice at Harvard) that Yale appoints its professors in the Academical Department with the expectation that they will be efficient teachers, and will make teaching rather than the writing of poetry or history the business of their lives; and that therefore it rarely appoints one who has not served some sort of apprenticeship in the work of teaching. We in Squashville are not convinced that Brainerd, or Percival, or Willis, would have been worth more in a professor's chair than any one of our living professors, or of those whose names are starred in the catalogue. Perhaps Mr. Phelps could contrive some way in which a "great" poet (whose poetry is convertible into cash over the counter of his publisher at the rate of a gold eagle for every stanza) can be persuaded to doff "his singing robes" and bend himself to the prosaic work of teaching undergraduates; —or could tell how a historian (one who is already great and for whose not yet written volumes, printers and translators are impatiently waiting) can be induced to relinquish his unfinished life-work, and, instead of writing history for admiring nations, consent to teach in college class-rooms.

For this too narrow and conservative spirit in the management of the college, Mr. Phelps proposes a remedy which he is sure will be of sovereign efficacy. His plan is, for substance, to abolish the existing corporation and to place the legislative and appointing power of the university, and the custody of its

endowments, in the hands of a board or council chosen by the annual mass-meetings of Alumni. This plan of reconstruction is explained and supported by two writers in the "Nation," for Aug. 11, and Sept. 1, who profess to represent the genuine "Young Yale," that Mr. P. speaks of. One of them expresses the demand of "Young Yale" thus,—"As Mr. Phelps says, it wants the government of Yale College outside of the Faculty, the government that appoints the Faculty, lodged in some other hands than Congregational ministers of the State of Connecticut." The other, representing "Young Yale's real complaint," says, "We think ministers are, as a class, men of second-rate ability, and that there are few of them who are not inefficient in thought, narrow-minded, and in the true sense of the word, uncultivated." Again, "Ministers are, as a rule, inferior men—that, sir, broadly stated, is the position of Young Yale, and it is just as well that the real root of trouble should be pointed out." The two communications have one signature, "Alumnus;" but we learn from the editor that the second Alumnus is not the same with the first.

Such, then broadly and frankly uttered at last, is the demand of those who call themselves "Young Yale." I do not inquire how many they are, nor by what authority they assume to represent the graduates of recent years. It is enough that the demand has been made by one so responsible as Mr. Phelps, and so willing to take the responsibility. His contemptuous description of the Corporation was not a mere exhibition of bad manners, but as interpreted by the first "Alumnus," and more expressly by the second, it demands that "the President and Fellows," who have been for one hundred and seventy years the incorporated Board of trust must be got rid of because they are "Congregational ministers of the State of Connecticut,"—and because "ministers are, as a class [not only in Connecticut but generally] men of second rate ability,"—"as a rule, inferior men"—of whom few "are not inefficient in thought, narrow-minded, and in the true sense of the word uncultivated." I propose to consider this demand as it appears to those who regard it from what "Young Yale" may call the Squashville point of view.

I. Respect for Mr. Phelps requires me to take some notice of what he suggests, (and what his supporters affirm more sweepingly) about ministers of the Gospel. It may be that our friend (I do not know where he goes to church) finds in the quality of the discourses which he hears in his attendance on public worship, and in the quality of the clergyman who has the felicity of ministering to him, some reason for his contemptuous estimate of the clerical profession. But let me tell him that there are thousands of intelligent men who do not agree with him in that estimate. "Ministers," quoth "Young Yale," as represented by these writers, "are as a class men of second-rate ability." A very obvious reply is that lawyers, *as a class*, are men of second-rate ability—that physicians, *as a class*, (especially if we must count in the Homeopaths, the Hydropaths, the steam-doctors and all pretenders to the healing art) are men of second-rate ability—that the same thing is true of journalists, *as a class*, of authors, of artists, and of capitalists. The first-rate men in every profession are the few; and their superiority implies a relative inferiority of the many. Some ministers are doubtless men of second-rate ability, while some lawyers, and some men in various other professions are men of first rate ability; but it is equally beyond dispute that while many lawyers, and many in every other profession, are men of second-rate ability, some ministers are men whose ability is as conspicuous as that of the foremost in any other profession.

If we put another construction on this contemptuous language, we find no more truth in it than when we take its most obvious meaning. That ministers as a class are inferior in ability to lawyers as a class, or to the aggregate body of other professional men, may be asserted by unthinking ignorance, but it need not be disproved till somebody shall have attempted to prove it. Yet in passing I may say to those who call themselves "Young Yale," that their rashness on this subject is not creditable to the college at which they profess to have been educated. They seem to assume that every man's "ability" is in proportion to the money thathe gets in his profession—that because "Rev. Mr. Pickering of Squashville" lives very frugally on a small salary, and counts himself happy if by

much self-denial he can obtain for his children the highest and best education, while Hon. Mr. Tupman of Fiskville gets fifty thousand dollars for his services in a lawsuit, therefore Mr. Tupman is a man of first-rate ability, and Mr. Pickering is a man of second-rate, or perhaps of fourth-rate ability. I am sorry for the graduate whose *alma mater* has not succeeded in teaching him a more enlightened and liberal method of measuring the relative "ability" of men employed in liberal professions.

I will even say, for the benefit of the self-styled "Young Yale," that the profession which they ignorantly disparage is preëminently—as compared with other professions which require both general and special culture—*the* learned profession. And inasmuch as their flings are at Congregational ministers in particular, and more distinctly at "Congregational ministers of the State of Connecticut," I too may speak of those ministers particularly, without implying that they are, or that they are not, superior to ministers of other churches in learning and culture, or in mental vigor. Take the average of talent and of learning and culture among the lawyers in Connecticut or in the State of New York, or among members of the medical profession in either State (not counting the irregular practitioners,) or among the journalists, or among the mixed multitude of *literateurs* who make authorship a profession: and there need be no hesitation in affirming that the average both of talent and of learning and culture among the Congregational ministers of Connecticut is higher. There is no profession in which the ratio of college graduates to the whole number is so great, or which demands so rigorously of those who would become members of it a college education or its equivalent. A man may be admitted into a Law school or Medical school not only with less of the character which gives promise of diligence in study, but with less of general knowledge and culture, than would be requisite for his admission into any Congregational Divinity school in New England or elsewhere. Nor is there any other profession which requires of aspirants, in addition to that general culture, so long a term of special study. In a Law school, or a Medical school, the course of study for one who is already B. A., runs through two years,

while the course in a Divinity school is planned for three years. And what are the special studies introductory to these several professions? I will not say a word in disparagement of legal or medical studies as related to learning in general. Rightly conducted under broad-minded teachers—especially if the student has already been trained by academic discipline—they liberalize the mind and lead it forth into broad views of truth, while they sharpen the faculties for special service. But no professional studies are in their nature so fit to train the mind and to give it enlargement and elevation, as those which make up the curriculum of preparation for the ministry. Other professional students drop—shall I say forget?—their linguistic studies as soon as they hear with inward self-application the formula *Admitto te ad primum in artibus gradum.* The theological student begins his course by forming an acquaintance with the most venerable of extant languages—a language so different in its grammatical forms, in its syntax, in its idioms, in all its lights and shades, from every variety of Aryan speech, that he finds himself entering a new world of thought. At the same time he renews and extends his study of the Greek language—not for the mere sake of study, as when he was in college, but with an immediately practical aim; watching to detect the nicest turns of thought implied in mode, and tense or in prepositions and particles; and learning at once the science and the art of interpretation by learning to interpret that unique body of literature, the documents of the Christian religion. His study of the questions concerning the origin and transmission of those documents revives and enlarges his study of all ancient history. Meanwhile he has entered another field of inquiry—the relation of nature to its author and its end; or in other words the relation of all physical science to the knowledge of God. The study of God in nature and in the instincts and moral cognitions of the human soul, introduces him to the study of God in human history—the revealed God whom the monotheistic Hebrews worshipped of old, and whom the Christ of Hebrew expectation has revealed to the world. As he studies that revelation of God which centers in the mysterious person and history of Jesus of Nazareth and in his relations to the fact of sin and to redemption from sin—as he stud-

ihs the nature and history of the spiritual community which recognizes Christ as its unity and its life, the kingdom in which Christ in king, and which is subduing the world to God by forces which are not of this world—he finds himself confronted not only with questions that reach through all the sciences of matter, but also with questions that bring the science of mind and the science of duty and all the departments of social science into an intimate relation with the government of God and with the hope of redemption. With all these studies he combines another sort of culture. From first to last he is learning to use his faculty of utterance. He studies not merely that he may know how to think, but not less that he may know how to make others think. The art which he is to practice in life is, the art of teaching and persuading, not only by the methods of public discourse, but in all the ways of intercourse with individual minds—the art of awakening thought, of guiding inquiry, of comforting sorrow, of touching the deepest sensibilities, and of bringing Divine realities into effectual contact with human consciousness; and all this must be in his doing of it, not art, but the purest spontaneity. Let me say to those who think they are Young Yale, that the profession which they contemptuously disparage is and always must be, in a Christian commonwealth, *the* learned profession. Old Yale knows this, and whoever calls himself Young Yale and does not know it, is "inefficient in thought, narrow-minded, and in the true sense of the word, uncultivated."

If, thus vindicating my own profession, I seem to have "become a fool in glorying," I say to the assailants, "Ye have compelled me;" and to others, let it be my apology that sometimes it is right and necessary to answer a fool according to his folly. I do not imply that Mr. Phelps is a fool; but only the scantiest courtesy is due to his backers in the Nation. The bearing of what I have said on the issue raised by them, about the intellectual competence of clergymen to be Fellows of Yale College, is sufficiently evident.

II. If anything may be safely inferred from the details suggested by Mr. Phelps in his fault-finding, the management of Yale College would not be greatly improved by the change which he proposes. The existing and ancient management,

under the constitution which the "Young Yale" represented by Mr. Phelps and his friends would subvert, has gained for the institution its present standing and reputation; has placed in the chairs of instruction men worthy of the eulogy lavished upon them by their grateful pupil in his speech at the commencement dinner; has so carefully husbanded the gifts of benefactors that, in one hundred and seventy years, nothing has been lost by carelessness or lack of judgment; has developed out of the mere college, with its four undergraduate classes and its unorganized handful of resident graduates, a university of five distinct faculties; and, in its Sheffield Scientific School, is giving to the country a better and more successful illustration of what may be done in the methods and for the ends of "the new education" than is given by any other institution, by whomsoever managed. What is it that the self-styled "Young Yale" would have that is better than this? I look to what Mr. Phelps has so gently and courteously told us; and I find that he wants something less "saintly," more "worldly," more "worldly-wise"—or, in an expressive word of student-slang, more *splurgy*. Let there be a virtual confiscation of the endowments by the making the alumni a corporation who shall elect a board of managers, and what shall we see? Looking to Mr. Phelps who favored us with his ideas on the subject, and who will doubtless have a controling influence in the new corporation, I find that we shall see a new style of elections to professorships—the chairs of instruction offered not to young scholars who have had some experience in teaching, and who are invited and expected to make teaching their life-work, and to win their reputation by their skill and success in that business, but to men who have already achieved their celebrity in some other business, and whose impulses and aspirations are in a different direction. The old saintly policy which employs teachers to do the honest work of teaching—just as saintly people gifted with common sense employ physicians to do medical work and lawyers to manage a case in the courts—is to be exploded, and the new worldly-wise policy will offer the professorships to illustrious historians and world-famous poets, who will revolt as readily as Mr. Phelps himself from the hard and irksome work of teaching college-students. Whether the

expectation is that Pegasus will condescend to become a patient and slow-moving drayhorse, or that the scanty funds devoted to the payment of teachers will be expended in purchasing ribbons for the decoration of his mane and wings, we are not informed; but, be that as it may, the proposal does not convince me that this Young Yale (so-called) would manage the university any better than it has been managed hitherto by Old Yale, with ten Connecticut ministers of the gospel in its corporation.

But is there in the scheme no suggestion more worthy of serious consideration? Is this the great change of policy for which the governing power must be transferred from the existing corporation to the mass-meeting of alumni? Methinks I hear in reply an indignant *No!* What else, then, does Mr. Phelps propose? Two things only. *First*, more pains-taking to decorate the the commencement platform with tho presence of notable and betitled strangers—some spread-eagle senator from a pioneer state—some tomnoddy of an English lord who, having come over by the last steamer for the sublime purpose of of shooting prairie hens in Illinois, can be induced to wait a few days for the sublimer purpose of exhibiting his florid complexion and muscular limbs to the alumni—five hundred of whom (we are expressly assured) will rush to commencement for the gratification which the sight of so illustrious a stranger will give them. *Secondly*, more pains-taking to waylay the sons of distinguished fathers in the preparatory schools or under private tutors, and, when one has been secured for Yale College, to communicate the fact incontinently to the Associated Press and have it telegraphed to all parts of the United States, so that thousands of families who never before heard of Yale, shall inquire what it is and where it is, and shall be induced to send their sons also to an institution so distinguished. These two expedients are, in principle, one. Neither of them rises above the dignity of an "advertising dodge," though their ingenuity might be pronounced worthy of Barnum.

"I had a dream which was not all a dream." The desired change had been effected. Our venerable college had obtained "a living connection with the outer world." "The alumni from Maine to California" had "become Yale Col-

lege," and "the bounding blood of youth" was "throbbing in every one of its ancient members." Musing on the new era, I seemed to be present at a meeting of the Directors elected by Young Yale. They did not seem to be weighed down with over-much saintliness—there was no suggestion of any thing clerical in or about them; they were costumed like men of this world and of this generation—some in velvet jackets—some in gorgeous waistcoats; and the apartment was as full of tobacco smoke as the Graduates' Hall when the speaking has begun after a commencement dinner. Any body could see that they were smart men, familiar with the art of "catering to human weakness and infirmity"—men well endowed with "that worldliness which is" (or is thought to be) "not inconsistent with godliness"—men of the sort whose worldly wisdom (sometimes known as cunning) is all that can be consistent with godliness in the most liberal meaning of that word. They were busy with schemes of progress,—sending out runners to intercept ingenuous but verdant youth on their way to Harvard or Cornell and bring them safely to Yale, "cash on delivery"—sending out canvassers, like the canvassers of some book published by subscription that is to be tremendously popular—sending out bill-stickers and painters; and lo! I seemed to see, in staring letters, on rocks and fences, along the railways and the highways, outvying "Helmbold" and "Plantation Bitters," the spirit stirring words, "*Send your boys to Yale! Every graduate shares in the government.*" I awoke, and to my great relief—behold, it was a dream!

I am happy to believe that my dream would hardly come true in every particular, even if those who speak in the name of Young Yale could manage in their own way; but certainly the ideas propounded by Mr. Phelps look in that direction and have no other tendency. He is evidently under the impression that Yale College ought to be managed as Mr. Barnum manages his museum, or as Mr. Bowen manages his Independent. In his philosophy the *sine qua non* of success for a great and historic institution of learning, not less than for a great showman or a great quack, is tact and skill in catering to human infirmity. To assume that in this respect he is not a fair specimen of the party which he stands up to represent would

be disrespectful toward him. Therefore I am constrained to believe that there would be very little reason to hope for any substantial improvement or progress if the management of the institution were committed to him and those in whose name he speaks. If Mr. Phelps, instead of being indebted for his education to Old Yale, had graduated from an institution conducted on the principles which he propounds in the name of Young Yale, he would not have been half the man that he now is.

Let me say that, from the loopholes of my obscurity here in Squashville, I have been observing, through many years, the fermentation of opinions about college government and college studies, which goes on among young graduates and undergraduates, and among others who know less than they, and have thought less on the subject. There is hardly a journalist —though he be only half-fledged, just leaping from his stand in the composing-room to the chair editorial, like a young bird from its nest to a convenient bough—who does not feel himself far more competent to give "an opinion as is an opinion," on all such matters, than President Woolsey and the entire Faculty of the Academical Department of Yale College. Mr. Phelps himself, with ten years over his head since his graduation, is hardly more at home than the most juvenile of graduates, or the most uninformed of journalists, in all this talk "about a living connection with the world without," about "the new blood which throbs in every vein of this mighty republic," about "what is wanted in the scenes for which Yale educates her children," and about that superior "knowledge of the people's wants" which is the peculiar endowment of those who are in the people and of the people." With all becoming deference I must say that I have learned to distrust the judgment of men who deal largely in such phrases, and especially their judgment on questions about liberal education. Believing very heartily in the possibility of improvement and progress in the government of college students and the methods of college instruction—nay, suspecting sometimes that a little relaxation in the rigor with which students at Yale College are held to a high standard of proficiency might do no harm on the whole,—I cannot bring myself to believe that the men who use those phrases so glibly know very well what they

are talking about. Nor am I any more convinced of their superior wisdom when they descend from their sonorous generalities to the details of college reconstruction. When, after reading and hearing the crude notions which they throw out, I try to conceive the shape and guise which Yale College would take on under their management, I am compelled to think that the ends for which our venerable institution exists would be sacrificed instead of being promoted by placing it under their control.

And what kind of a college is it which—I will not say Young Yale, but Young America—is clamorous for? First of all, the marking system must be abolished. Nothing is more odious to Mr. Jefferson Brick, when he condescends to pen a leader on those mediæval and monkish institutions, American colleges. Away with all marks designed to register the student's proficiency in his several studies! Certainly, a freeborn American who is old enough to smoke, and who is full of the new blood which throbs, &c., ought to judge for himself, when he pays his term-bills, whether he is getting a satisfactory pennyworth of college learning. Away, too, with all marks of the other sort—marks for "sleeping over," for roosting on the college fence, for the gentlemanly sport of "hazing" a Freshman, for disturbing the peace of the city with midnight yells, or for any breach of college regulatious. The free, high spirit of an American student ought not to be vexed with marks and college censures. Let him be governed by his own sense of propriety. Coördinate with this demanded reformation, and logically deducible from it, is another: abolish the Procrustean bedstead of a prescribed course of studies, which assumes that all students are alike in their talents and aptitudes, and are destined to the same employment in their subsequent years. Let every student decide for himself what he will study and how much; for is not such freedom essential to that pursuit of happiness which is one of his inalienable rights under the immortal Declaration of Independence on the fourth of July, 1776? Then follows another demand: Abolish all "compulsory religion" in colleges. Let there be no prayers in the college chapel; or if something of that sort is required by the present benighted state of public opinion, let there be no mon-

itor to note the absent or the tardy. Especially let no man be required to attend public worship on Sunday anywhere. Why should a promising young atheist who can talk about "protoplasm," and who has learned not indeed that he is no *body*, (quite the reverse of that,) but that his personality is no thing at all— or a "heathen Chinee" who already accepts and practices three distinct religions quite contradictory of each other—be required to defile his conscience by any religious observance? Then add one more reform: Abolish recitations and dry textbooks. Lectures are the thing for a university—attractive and brilliant lectures, not by plodding professors, but by distinguished lecturers, whose names, whenever they are announced, draw a full house—lectures by celebrated men whom all the world runs after—lectures fresh and lively from the outer world, and got up with a due regard to the fundamental principle of all human success—the principle of catering to "human weakness and infirmity."

I think I see what Yale College might become under the renovating sway of such reformers. Not that Mr. Phelps entertains all these wild notions of what a college should be; but his speech leads in that direction. His great desideratum is "a living connection with the world without," snd a consequent recognition of "the people's wants;" and his remedy for all existing defects is, that the governing power shall consist of men "who are in the people and of the people." The very gist of his complaint is, that with an old fogy corporation, keeping up a succession of old fogy professors, the outside world is unable to introduce such changes as "the people" want. In brief, the end to be attained by the proposed revolution is nothing less than to make the annual meeting of Alumni a concourse for the agitation of all sorts of opinions, brought in from "the outside world," about college studies and college discipline. Very naturally, at no distant period, there might arise a division of the Alumni into parties and factions; for instead of meeting as now to revive old memories, to speak of the departed, and to brighten the chain of friendship that binds the survivors to each other, they are to meet in the collisions of debate and of business. They are to meet as a great constituency for the election of a legislative and

governing Board; and surely neither Mr. Plelps nor those whom he speaks for can expect that such an election will in any instance fail to be a contested election. Candidates must be nominated; and in order to this there must be consultation beforehand, and caucuses of one party and another representing various ideas and sympathies. Then think what scheming and struggling there will be to bring up voters on one side and the other. Who does not know that in such a body as the Alumni of Yale College there are and always must be wide divergencies of opinion? The tug of conflict in one of those elections may be between the administration ticket and the opposition ticket. Or it may be between the liberal ticket and the conservative; or between the ticket which represents a high standard of classical attainments, and another which promises a substitution of the physical sciences in place of the dead languages and the old literary culture. And while other great movements are coming in from "the outside world," like tides from the Atlantic in the Bay of Fundy, what is to hinder the political questions and partizanships that agitate "the world without" from surging into the Graduates' Hall on the day before Commencement, and even throwing their foam over the tables of the commencement dinner? Then we may have a Republican ticket, and a Democratic ticket, and a Women's Rights ticket coquetting with both, and an Anti-Masonic ticket, and a Maine Law ticket striving to detach a few votes from what happens to be the main issue. Then, too, we may have the anthracite and iron lords of Pennsylvania pouring out their greenbacks like water to secure the success of a Tariff ticket, while all who refuse to vote it are denounced in the New York Tribune as bought with British gold. Nay, let us not forget that in a closer connection with such an institution as ours there are other interests than those which I have suggested—interests reaching deeper into the foundations of society, and guarded by more jealous sensibilities. The issue may be a religious one—between tickets representing different religious bodies, or even between an Orthodox and evangelical ticket on one side, and an Anti-evangelical and anti-religious ticket on the other side. Does not the undisguised contempt which some of those who think they represent Young Yale express towards ministers

of the Gospel indicate the possibility of such an issue at an early day after the expected revolution?

III. There is, therefore, another view of this matter—a view which Mr. Phelps and his friends do not seem to have considered. How can the revolution be brought about? I do not forget the statement, made on the authority of Mr. Evarts, (whose opinion on such a point may safely be accepted as conclusive against any opinion not pronounced judicially from the bench,) that the change proposed is not legally impossible. But does that statement mean anything more than that a change in the charter of Yale College would not be illegal and void if made by the legislative power of the State and consented to by the existing Corporation? Nearly sixty years ago, an attempt was made on Dartmouth College, with a result which Mr. Evarts did not overlook in giving his opinion, and which even ministers in places like Squashville are familiar with, though "Young Yale" and Fiskville may not have heard of it. On that occasion, Young Dartmouth came to the rescue in the person of Daniel Webster; as in a like emergency for our *alma mater* (if it should now arise) Young Yale, or Middle-aged Yale would come to the rescue in the person of William M. Evarts.

Those who think that the constitution of Yale College can be changed by a vote in a commencement assembly, do not understand the case. For their benefit, therefore, if there are any such persons, I may be allowed to make some statements which, to readers better informed, may seem rudimentary. The institution about which the present question has arisen, was founded with some formality by ten Connecticut ministers, whom a common consent of their brethren had designated to perform that duty, each of them laying down a number of books, and saying, "I give these books for the founding of a college in this colony." By that act, prior to any charter, they became, according to the principles of Common Law, the creators of a trust, and the founders of the institution for which the books were given. The institution which they founded was a religious institution, not accidentally, but essentially; for the modern theory—a college in which religion is only tolerated, and a university which pledges itself to exclude the

knowledge of God from the circle of the sciences and to ignore the relation of the Bible to the culture of true manliness,—had not then been invented. At least they never had heard of such a theory, and if they had heard of it they would have rejected it with horror. Their avowed motive, expressed in their petition for a charter (as appears from the preamble to the charter granted in 1701) was their zeal for the "upholding and propagating of the Protestant Christian religion by a succession of learned and orthodox men;" and they represented themselves as "undertakers for the founding, suitably endowing and ordering a collegiate school, within his Majesty's colony of Connecticut, wherein youth may be instructed in the arts and sciences, who, through the blessing of Almighty God, may be fitted for public employment both in church and civil state."

The religious character, then, of the institution founded in 1700 and chartered in 1701, and the permanence of its usefulness as "upholding and propagating the Protestant Christian religion," were what the founders, and those whose representatives they were, regarded as of primary importance. Observe now in what method the charter, granted at their request, intended to secure and perpetuate the religious character of the college. Not by imposing upon students or teachers, or upon the Trustees and their successors, the yoke of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. Not by requiring anybody to accept and adopt the Westminster Confession. Not by setting up any syntagma of Christian doctrines as a standard of orthodoxy, inflexible and immutable. The only—and in their view sufficient—guarantee for that feature of their institution which they deemed most important, was the simple provision in the charter that the Trustees (never to be fewer than seven nor more than eleven) should be "ministers of the Gospel, inhabiting within this colony." Hitherto that guarantee has been sufficient for its purpose. Yale College always has been, and, save by some unfaithfulness on the part of its guardians or some violent subversion of its charter, it must always remain a religious institution. It was intended to have, and it has had till now, "a vital connection," with the churches of Connecticut—especially the Congregational church-

es, by whom, through the agency of their pastors, it was called into being before any other church existed in the colony.

In consideration of the connection between liberal studies and the well-being of the State—and with an eye, doubtless, both to what students from Conecticut had been spending at Cambridge, and to what students from other colonies might spend at a college in Connecticut—the government of the colony became from the first, in such measure as that day of small things would permit, a chief patron of the college. A yearly subsidy of "one hundred and twenty pounds country pay" was granted in the charter, "until this Court order otherwise;" and from time to time other donations were made, without which the institution would have foundered. Out of such dependence of the college on the public treasury, there arose a disposition on the part of the Legislature to supervise the institution, and to control it at discretion. But "the President and Fellows," as they were styled in the new charter of 1745, resisted the attempt at legislative control, and their arguments (though they were only ministers) were too strong to be withstood.

At last when the college had lived almost a century, and the little colony had become an independent commonwealth, one of the United States of America under the Federal Constitution—all doubts and discussions concerning the relations between the corporation of Yale College and the government of Connecticut were brought to a satisfactory conclusion which I cannot describe in any other way so well as by a quotation from President Woolsey's "Historical Discourse" one hundred and fifty years after the founding of the college.

"In October, 1791, a committee was appointed to confer with the President and Fellows of the College in relation to its affairs and to report at the next session. In their report dated May 25, 1792, they say that they found the Corporation disposed to communicate without reserve every circumstance respecting the care and management of the institution under their government. They found that the number of students on an average was about one hundred and thirty, that the severity of the ancient Freshman discipline was almost done away, and that the literary exercises of the respective classes had of late years undergone considerable alterations, so as the better to accommodate the education of the undergraduates to the present state of literature. They further found that the state of the College treasury was in a much better condition than they had apprehended, and that the finances had been managed with great dexterity, pru-

dence and economy. After mentioning the amount of funds and of annual expenses, they stated that another building was wanted to accommodate and receive the students, about one-half of whom were obliged to furnish themselves with lodgings in the town for want of room in the College, for which purpose, as well as for additions to the library, for the support of a professor of mathematics, and for increase of salaries the help of the legislature was needed. This report, it is said, gratified the legislature; and an act was passed appointing commissioners to receive the balances of taxes laid for the discharge of the principal and interest of the State debt, and to pay over such balances for the use of the College at New Haven, particularly for the erection of a new College building containing students' rooms, and for the purpose of serving as a fund to be applied to the support of professors. The conditions of this grant were that of the sum collected in these balances the College authorities should pay or transfer in legal form to the Treasurer of the State fifty per cent. in some kind of public stock of the United States; and that eight members of the State government, the Governor, Lieut. Governor and six senior assistants in the council, should be *ex officio* members of the Corporation of Yale College, with full powers except as to filling up vacancies in the clerical portion of that body. This act, contemplating a modification of the charter, was accepted not unwillingly by the existing Corporation. With slight alterations, rendered necessary by the new constitution of the State, the relation to the State has continued as was then settled until the present time. The old jealousy of a corporation for educational purposes managed exclusively by clergymen ceased. The happy adjustment, that neither portion of the body should exercise any control over the election of members pertaining to the other, tended to prevent all jealousy between the orders and to promote union. The civilians infused knowledge of law and of public sentiment into the Board. Their annual election, by giving each predominant political party only a temporary share in the control of the College, really removes it from all undue political influence. In effecting this union Mr. Hillhouse, then and for forty years afterward the Treasurer of the College, had a considerable part. The assistance rendered by this act to the College was of the greatest advantage to its financial interests, perhaps we may say of vital importance; nor could the measures for the increase of instructors and for additions to the buildings, which were carried through in Dr. Dwight's presidency, have been thought of without these very seasonable supplies." pp. 36–38.

It will be observed that the original guarantee for the religious character of the institution, was neither abrogated nor impaired by the alteration of the charter in 1792. The "civilians" admitted to the corporation are to the ministers as eight to eleven; and I believe that hitherto some of them have always been in full religious sympathy with their clerical associates. But if at any time the Governor, Lieutenant-Governor and six senior Senators of Connecticut, should be, one and all, members of religious bodies not in communion with the Congregational churches of Connecticut—if they should be

irreligious men, or even anti-religious in the most malignant way—if by some revolution in political parties eight Roman Catholics should be introduced into the corporation; or eight Jews; or eight Socialists and Red-republicans; or eight Mormons, or eight naturalized Buddhists; the college would still be, as from its beginning, a religious institution, consecrated to "the upholding and propagating of the Protestant Christian religion by a succession of learned and orthodox men."

The *ex officio* members of the corporation are always welcome to their places without regard to their political partizanship, and without calling in question their religious belief or unbelief. Their presence is not an empty honor, like the coveted presence of "the distinguished Senator from Alaska" on a commencement platform, nor has it in any instance within my knowledge been felt to be a disgrace. No distinction is recognized between them and their associates in debating or in voting. Their practical sagacity as men conversant with public affairs is always appreciated. Sometimes their experienced skill, and sometimes their munificent friendship, is highly valuable to the finances of the institution. But if they should unite their strength to abolish the religious character of the college, or to frustrate the religious design for which it was founded, they would be powerless; for the guarantee in the original charter is as effective in 1870 as it was in 1701. Now if those who call themselves Young Yale propose to substitute for these eight representatives of the old commonwealth of Connecticut, or for any of them, an equal number of men to be elected in the commencement meeting of graduates, let them try. Let them send in their petitions to the legislature. Perhaps Mr. Phelps will consent to appear as counsel for the petitioners, and to try his persuasiveness on the "Hon. Mr. Domneh of Oldport." Let them try whether the democracy of Connecticut will consent to surrender, in whole or in part, its purchased and stipulated right of having eight representatives of its own in the corporation of Yale College. Mr. Pickering of Squashville has no objections, and will make no opposition. Nay, I will assure those who are disposed to try, that all the Pickerings—every one of the ten—will refrain from opposing the change, whenever the State is found willing

to give up its connection with the university. But let the negotiators remember that the gifts from the State, which the university has received as the price of its consent to that connection, or by virtue of its relation to the State, are in no event to be refunded.

The assault, however, both by the two writers in the Nation, and by Mr. Phelps in his speech, is mainly directed against the clerical part of the corporation. The "ministers" are the sort of men who, because they are ministers, are incompetent to the trust which they have received from their predecessors. Let me ask what it is which these assailants propose to do? What they would do if they could is evident enough. They do not believe in men who are by profession religious men, students and teachers of the Christianity contained in the Bible; for men of that profession are as a class second-rate men. The problem which they have taken in hand is to get these men out of the corporation of Yale College, and my question is, "How do they propose to do it?" Do they expect to persuade the present corporation to abdicate their trust (if the legislature will consent) and to give over the entire university with all the interests involved, to the control of another Board differently constituted? Doubtless it would be easy to convince each of the ten, apart, that he as an individual is at the best only a second-rate man in comparison with "men who sit on the Supreme bench, or who control the cabinet of the executive," or with "successful men" in the city of New York. Doubtless any one of them might be persuaded to vacate his seat in the expectation of its being filled by a wiser and abler man. But to convince them all, or even a majority of them, that they are unfit to hold the great and precious trust simply because they are ministers,—will not be easy. Knowing something about ministers, and especially Connecticut ministers, I can say with great confidence that no insults on their persons or their profession will drive them from the trust transmitted to them by the Founders, and guaranteed by the original compact between the Founders and the commonwealth. Surely they who hope to succeed in such an enterprise by such means, cannot be reckoned higher than "second-rate men."

But let all this be forgotten, and let us suppose that the enterprise has been undertaken with a more sagacious view of the connection between means and ends. Let us suppose a courteous memorial addressed to the President and Fellows, subscribed by the names of the memorialists, and asking that the government of this venerable institution, instead of remaining where the Founders placed it, be transferred to the graduates dispersed over the world. The memorialists admit that, under the existing constitution, the college has prospered hitherto, and has had a marvellous growth; but they intimate that in some particulars, not easily defined, it is behind the times, and they are sure that the graduates, if it can be put under their control, will come up to its help with great enthusiasm, and will set it forward at a rapid rate. I can tell beforehand what the result would be of such a memorial. The President and Fellows would reply, Yale College was designed to be a religious and Christian institution; and we cannot surrender the only security for its religious character. You offer us only vague promises which may mean much in your intention and yet never be fulfilled, but if you would add to the endowments a solid million of money to-day on the condition of our putting the whole trust out of our hands into yours, our answer would be the same: *Non possumus.*

Whether right or wrong, the firm belief of the President and at least the ten clerical Fellows always will be that the confidence of the churches, and the munificence of men who hold that a college ought to be a religious institution, are worth more than any patronage that is likely to come on any terms, from those graduates, be they ever so rich and ever so lavish, who have an outspoken contempt for Christian ministers. I know not how many they may be for whom Mr. Phelps seems to speak, and who are represented by the two writers in the Nation; but if I were in confidential relations with them, I would frankly advise them to discharge their minds immediately of all expectation that the revolution which they are planning will be consented to by the corporation as it is. If they are to accomplish what they have undertaken, they must try some other method.

What then? Will they address themselves to the legisla-

ture of Connecticut? But Yale College is not a State university, nor is it under the control of the State in the same sense in which Harvard College is under the control of Massachusetts. Its charter cannot be violated by a legislative act so long as there is a Supreme Court of the United States. If Senator Sumner would frame a bill for an act of Congress to guarantee a republican form of government to the State of Connecticut, and would put into the bill a new constitution for Yale College,—and if the two houses could be persuaded to pass the bill, and the President to sign it,—and then if the Supreme Court would recognize the act as not contrary to the supreme law of the land,—the thing would be done. Can it be done in any other way?

I have intended, throughout this communication, to speak of Mr. Phelps much more respectfully than he spoke of me, for I learned long ago to "reverence the young," and he is not yet old enough to be undeserving of respect. Let me then, in all seriousness and good feeling, make one suggestion tending toward a solution of the difficult problem which "Young Yale," so called, seems unable to solve. The late George Peabody gave one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for a Museum of Natural History in connection with Yale College. Wisely, as I think, and much to the relief of the President and Fellows, he placed that princely gift in the hands of his own trustees to be managed and expended by them for the use and benefit of the university in conformity with directions recorded in his instrument of donation. In like manner, a wealthy gentleman in the city of New York left, in his last will, a legacy of fifty thousand dollars to remain in the hands of his son, and the income of it to be expended by him, at his discretion, for the benefit of Yale College. The son is discharging that trust not only with all fidelity, but also, so far as I know, with sound discretion. These two facts may illustrate the hint I will venture to offer. If Young Yale really wants to be represented in the management of the funds, and to have by its elected trustees or visitors a direct influence over the policy of the institution, there is a way in which that desire can be attained. Suppose an University Fund of half a million for objects connected with the whole institution, and

a board of trustees or visitors elected by the Alumni to superintend the application of it,—would that answer the purpose? I will also suggest that a hundred thousand dollars for the Law Department is a great desideratum, and that whoever will give the money may make his own conditions as to the use of it, and like Mr. Peabody may establish his own arrangements by compact with the corporation.

I might have subscribed this letter (which was commenced as a letter to the Editor of the Nation,) ANOTHER ALUMNUS; for I also am a graduate of Yale College, and so is every one of my nine associates; and we do not admit that the *Socii* lose any of the dignities or privileges belonging to the *Alumni*. But as my letter has become too long for insertion in a weekly journal, and must reach the public on the pages of the graver and more capacious *New Englander*, I accept the less dignified name proposed by Mr. Phelps, and being "exhausted by keeping a few sheep in the wilderness" subscribe myself, most humbly,

TIMOTHY PICKERING,
of Squashville.

Oct. 1, 1870.